

A
BURMESE
LONELINESS

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THE WAY OF *Neikban*.

A
BURMESE LONELINESS

A TALE OF TRAVEL
IN
Burma, The Southern Shan States
and
Keng Tung

BY

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'The Pathan Borderland' ; 'Pāgan' ; 'Colloquial Yünnanese.'

*A friend, the love of a dog, the memory
of old days—of these none can rob me.*

With Map and Illustrations

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Affectionately Dedicated
TO
THE DOGS WHO TRAVEL WEST.

There's a long and tender vista of the dogs who travelled west,
Of the dogs who loved and worshipped me, and gave me all their best :
Who have comforted my exile, when I stood out all alone,
Who have shared with me my fortunes, who have made my life their own :
Who have sadly mourned my absence, and rejoiced at my return :
Ah ! the dogs who travelled westward—will they never more return ?

Out across the lonely river, whither many dogs have passed,
They are waiting—Ah, the waiting !—till I join them there at last.
Never doubting I'll remember—Gharrey, Molly, and the rest :
Such a patient, faithful vigil, for the master's coming west.
At the old familiar whistle they will all expectant rise,
Leap to welcome—Ah ! the welcome, in their joyous, shining eyes.



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P R E F A C E.

THESE pages are born of Solitude.

I have written here chiefly of Keng Tung, which, like so many other parts of Burma, offers special opportunities for research. Except for passing references by Garnier and a few others, and for some informing pages of the *Gazetteer*, it has as yet received little attention. Thrust forward in a great salient of our Burmese frontier, the old city of Keng Tung stands like an out-post of Empire, confronted, on three sides, by China, Siam, and French Indo-China.

This particular bit of frontier is of exceptional interest. Here, military considerations have given way before political needs. Mountain ranges, and even the line of the Salween River, have been over-stepped, in order to include as much of Thibaw's kingdom as seemed necessary. Burma reaches out almost into the 'Far East.' The influences which act upon the trade, character, and architecture of Keng Tung are quite as much Chinese as Burmese. Our borders here rest on the banks of the very Mekong itself. We become close neighbours of the French and Chinese, of Siamese, Laos and Annamites, and of a host of obscure hill people. Caravans come down to Keng Tung direct .

from Yünnan Fu. Our borders are open to raids by men of Canton and Kwung Hsi. Our nearest railway station is in Siam.

Distances are great. The real Burma is miles and miles away, at the end of a mountain road. In the Rains, when trees are blown down, even telegraphic communication with the outer world is sometimes cut. There is not really much harm in *that*, for remote solitudes of Empire are only held in leash with wires, and consequently we hate the telegraph. The wires have their uses, though a censor does what he can to minimize them. But, on the whole, telegraphs are a nuisance on the frontier. They are a restraint, when free action is most effective. They are only one of those clever contrivances with which we enslave ourselves.

The wire hums an unfriendly song,—“ You are all of you my slaves,” it says. “ I am an order—hum. I am a counter-order. I am a cypher message. Refer, and hesitate. You must not act.”

Sometimes it sings another refrain: “ You are heirs,” it cries, “ to all the fret and worry of materialism. You are strangers in this far land, isolated from your surroundings by great anxieties.”

And, indeed, we are loaded with anxiety in these serious days. The people about us are so free and happy, so utterly indifferent about the progress of the War. It is impossible not to compare regretfully their sheltered peace of mind, with all the multitude of complications

which disturb our own. Consider our little span of life, and how hard we strive. Yet, like these simple folk, we go forth hence naked out of it. I do not suggest that we can help materialism. It is bequeathed us from the past. Doubtless it is based upon necessity. I only compare it with the contentment we rather despise as primitive. So many ideals have gone overboard since 1914.

Only our own thoughts remain to us now—for whatever they happen to be worth. We may cultivate them still as of old, and seek through them fellowship with all humanity.

I suppose the principal attraction of out-post life is the Frontier itself, with all its problems and conflicts. Some of the conflicts are real. Others seem unreal. They are the outside disturbances, which lap with ghostly whispers along the border ; phantom armies, like those of *Tiara* and *Minamoto*, waging ceaseless war across the Straits of Shimonoseki. All this affords interest and relieves monotony. The great burden of the Burmese frontier is *Loneliness*, which is often enough not merely abstract, but develops into solid reality as months slip by. *Loneliness* is perhaps the most perplexing problem of any we are called upon to face. All are influenced by it one way or another. It develops power in this man, and destroys it in that. It forces some minds into narrow grooves, while others are deepened and widened by silent communion with the hills. Strange

friendships with Burmese and Chinamen are forced upon us, and ripen as our affections are won by manliness or tenderness in unexpected places. I have seen a British Officer weep for his dead Chinaman. We are taught the comradeship of animals, which rejoice or suffer as we do ourselves. And we are made conscious of the presence of Fairies of forest glades, of *Nats* of peak and pine, and of the God (the Chinese say He is divine) who weaves the enchantment of books.

So we find comfort and comradeship sufficient for our needs. The memory of the outside world alone breeds restlessness. The capacity for solitude is praised over and over again in the Buddhist books. I have understood a little now why that is so. No man can endure loneliness whose heart is bound to materialism, who is not wholly free from desire.

* * * * *

The problems we face are faced alone. The experience we gain is won individually. Little has been left on record for our guidance. After the first brief glamour of creation, out-posts fade away out of the public eye, and remain forgotten. There is almost virgin ground for research on the Burmese border—odd corners of which perhaps you have never even heard the name. This Empire of ours is a wonderful inheritance. A life-time is only long enough to explore a little bit of it. We can never enter into full possession of its mysteries. We know a valley here and there from Peshawur to Putao.

Of the *Beyond* we know nothing at all. From Cabul to Leh and Lhasa : from Yünnan Fu to Laung Praban—all those wastes and civilizations are veiled from most of us by the hills. And so, if fate has ever cast you into a solitude, as I have been thrown these four years upon the edge of Yünnan, you will know why I wrote '*A Burmese Enchantment*,' and why I am now impelled to resume here my record of men and things, of facts and fancies, of which once I never dreamed.

I said in '*A Burmese Enchantment*,' "If you became reincarnate in Burma for twenty lives, you would still be upon the threshold of greater discoveries. Increasing interest would only lure you to further research." But I doubt now if you could even learn the languages of Burma in twenty lives, mastering the lore and tradition behind some of them, and the stupendous literature behind others. You see, no one has ever managed yet even to count the number of those languages ! A lame acquaintance with Burmese, Chinese, Kachin, and so on, is about as much as most of us effect in one life-time, even with application. Therefore the complex heart of Burma remains hidden. And so it must remain.

As stars issue from the abysmal breast of Leo, so the great Tibeto-Burman tribes (Burmese, Chins, Kachins, Marus, and Kaws) have sprung from some dark region of the north. And so, too, Shans, Siamese, and Karens have come forth from some misty home

about the Yang-tze. They came at different times, and by different routes. They met different fortunes, and developed in varied circumstances. And they have forgotten utterly the story of their great irruptions. Only science and linguistic study are slowly piecing history together again.

It is still all intangible : and so are the rivers, come from out of the unknown : and the hills, which hide their secret behind an inscrutable front. And the people's thoughts and ways are not our thoughts and ways.

Above all, Solitude broods over the mountains, and sometimes overwhelms us in her embrace. We think we shall not welcome her. For she is an exacting Mistress—Solitude. She warps and bends us in her service. Some she leaves silent. Others she drives mad. Others again take to work, or to vice, for fear of her. But in spite of heartlessness, she knows the arts of allurements. Though she treats us ill, we cannot forget her : and afterwards, we look back with regret.

Men make the world they live in gay
Or sad—no matter what is there ;
Some find it desert all the way ;
And some a garden wonderous fair.

These with the birds have friendship made ;
They know when wind and water speak ;
They understand the light and shade
That sweep across the mountain peak.

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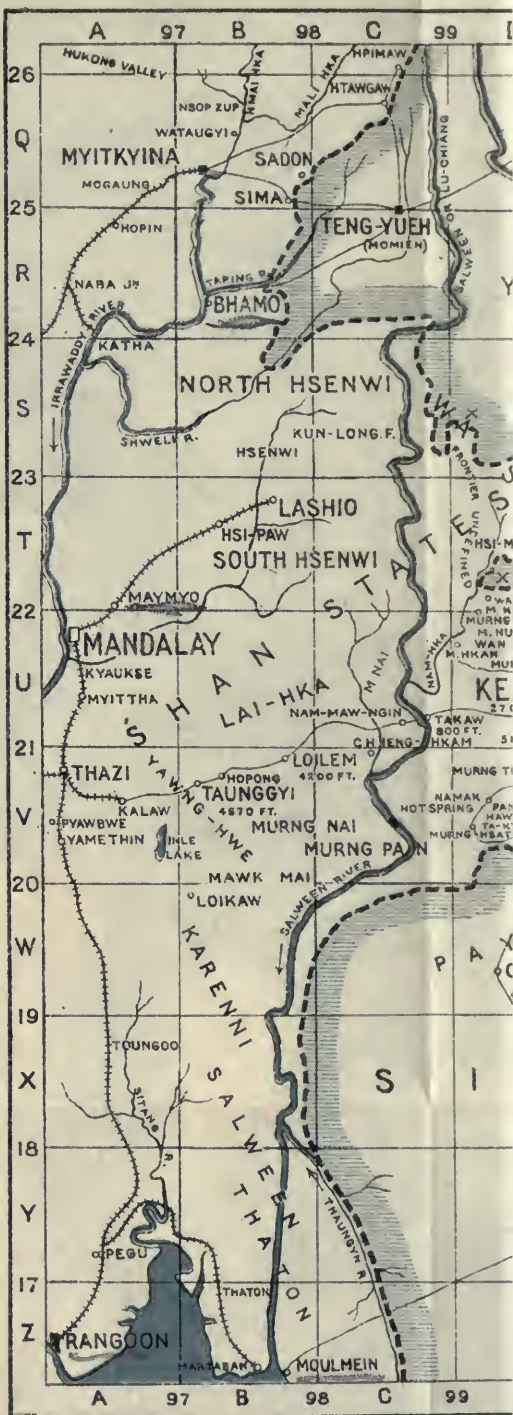
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CHAPTER I.

THE ROAD TO LONELINESS.

IF you have ever read *A Burmese Enchantment*, you may remember having stood with me on the crest of the 'Divide' above Hpimaw, when we looked across the Salween Valley. You may remember the decision arrived at beside the camp-fire at Chu-Yea-Haw, which, as you will see now, resulted in my appointment to command the Military Police Post of Loimwe.* Loimwe means *Hill of Mist*. It is an out-post in the Keng Tung State, the largest of all the Southern Shan States, and the most remote. Keng Tung lies right in the middle of the attached map.† Leaving Mandalay and Thazi, the train climbs slowly up out of the heat and haze of the Burmese plain. Thazi is described by its name as 'pleasant' (*tha*), and 'populated' (*zee*). I am afraid its God-fathers took rather a hopeful view. It is a place where break-down engines stand ever on duty. One, at least, is eternally getting up steam, or blowing it off again. Noisy trains crawl in from four directions, and carts creak along I don't know how many dusty roads.

* "*A Burmese Enchantment*," pages 192 and 200.

† Map, Square D. U.

As a rule, Burmese names are much more appropriate. From the northern terminus at Myitkyina (which means *By the Big River*), I had travelled down through Mogaung, a place which derives its name from the Shan words *Murng Kawng*, meaning *Country of the Drum*. And so passing by Shwebo (*Golden Chief*): Sagaing (*Acacia Branch*): Kyaukse (*Stone Weir*): and Myit-tha (*Pleasant River*): I had come to the *Pleasantly Populated* Thazi. The train now climbed the eastern hills, rising gradually out of the plain. All day long two little engines panted and reversed up the steep grades, creeping at a foot pace round mountain spurs, crossing giddily over ravines and gorges, until at last we reached the cool, fragrant zone of pines. Then we ran quickly down through meadows and pine-woods for the last few miles to Kalaw.*

I had marched down, through dripping forests, 130 miles from Htawgaw† to Myitkyina. The Rains were in full swing. It was *not* an ideal time for travelling. Now, another 332 miles of road lay before me, leading eastward from the rail-head at Kalaw, and ending far away on the border, not much short of the very Mekong itself.

The first marches are to Taunggyi, the head-quarters of the Southern Shan States Battalion of Military Police. Loimwe is an outpost of Taunggyi. Having

* Map, Square A. V. The height of Kalaw is 4,292 feet.

† Map, Square C. Q.

contracted a sore on my leg on the way down from Htawgaw, I cycled most of the way to Taunggyi, finding this much less painful than riding. The road from Kalaw wound through open down-land, which rose and fell to the distant horizon with here and there little white pagodas crowning the distant hills. The undulating country, as it lay dappled with sunshine and shadow, reminded me of that between Carlsbad and Marienbad until, beyond Thamakhan, it turned into a bleak bit of Scotland. Small cattle grazed over the open, rounded hills. Mists came bowling down and enveloped me. In the fog I felt the ground sloping steadily. The cycle tore down mile after mile of road. I had to use the breaks alternately to keep them cool all the way down to the He-ho plain. We were still 3,800 feet at He-ho. Two days later, on the 21st July, 1915, we climbed to 4,675 feet at Taunggyi.*

Taunggyi is an exceedingly charming little place. Already European settlers have been attracted by the beauty, healthiness and fertility of these Shan uplands. This country has a future before it. There is already a motor road, and the rail is to be extended. I selected many ideal estates and developed them in imagination as I rode along : settling how some day I would winter in crisp Burmese sunshine, passing my summers alternately in Japan, Kashmir, and England. But alas !

* Map, Square B. V.

“There’s a long long trail a-winding into the land of my dreams.”

The name Taunggyi means *Big Hill*. Some of the roads are lined with cherry trees, which blossom amazingly in January. Fruit and vegetables are abundant. The gardens are full of roses, chrysanthemums and other flowers, according to season. Strawberries grow well. Above all, Taunggyi is famous for its ‘Taunggyi Lillies,’ whose magnificent white trumpets stand in clusters six or eight feet from the ground. Unfortunately, I could not stay in Taunggyi more than a couple of days. A calculation showed that in spite of six day’s joining leave, and four Sundays, which were all days of grace, I had only 26 days left in which to cover the remaining 24 marches of my journey. The transfer regulations insist on an average daily journey of fifteen miles. That is reasonable enough. But, in this case, the distance (332 miles from Kalaw) is considerable. The rainy season also was at its height. So the short halt was a busy one. Major Oldfield, the Battalion Commandant, and Mrs Oldfield, were most kind. I was fortunate in finding in head-quarters both Captain Kenny and Captain Arnot, the Commandants respectively of Loilem and Loikaw posts.* Mules and carts had to be hired for the baggage. A year’s stores, previously ordered from Rangoon, had to be picked up. My heavy baggage had to be stored. And, lastly, postal arrangements had to

* Map, Squares B. V. and B. W.

be made. There is no insured post in the Shan States. Incidentally, the Stamp Act is not in force. There is a letter-post once a week to Loimwe. The mail travels by mule 288 miles in eleven days. There is no parcel-post. Parcels of less than eleven pounds are forwarded by letter-post, regardless of expense, but heavier parcels wander along 'by any old escort.' There used formerly to be a parcel-post. The reason for its abolition is rather curious—namely, that it was *too popular*. It was used so extensively, that the existing mules could not cope with it. So, instead of increasing the facilities, the Powers-that-be abolished them altogether! Their reasoning must have been not unlike that of a native shopman I once knew, who refused to stock cheese—'*because it sold out too quickly.*'

Of course, the thing to do is not to order any parcels. I expect the roads to all out-posts are paved with this good intention. Unfortunately, parcels and catalogues are a well known frontier problem. Many a man lost his chance of saving good outpost pay, simply because he failed to burn catalogues unopened. And if he himself never indulged in catalogue-shopping, I am sure his Burmese servants did, and *that* finally comes to about the same thing. Personally I should be glad to possess again all the money I spent on telegrams. A wire costs so little, and saves so much time over 300 miles of mule road. To release the type, the final proofs of *A Burmese Enchantment* had to be corrected telegraphically!! But except for these extravagances, there is

nothing to spend money on. Clothes and other things do full time : and the absence of shops has its compensation in war time.

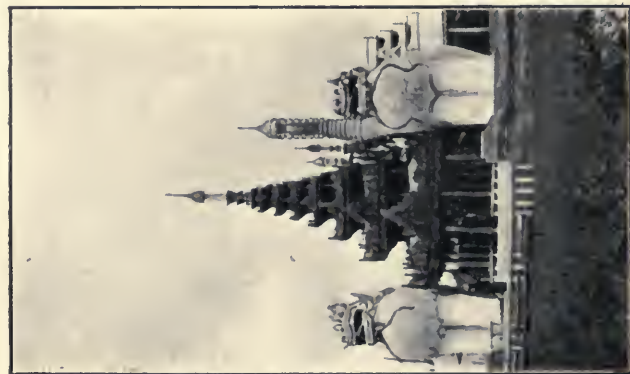
I shall not describe the interminable march to Keng Tung in detail. Indeed, most of it remains to me only as a confused memory of plateaux, hills and rivers, and of pushing on day by day to a bungalow which was the twin brother of the last. All the rest houses are raised high off the ground on posts. Each has a front-verandah, and two bedrooms behind, with a passage between them. The out-houses of some are full of snakes, and of others wasps, and this is the only means of distinguishing one from another.

But I have a clearer recollection of certain places. One is the Hopong Pagoda, 12 miles out of Taunggyi.* Scores of slim Shan Pagodas crowd round the base of the white, central shrine, which rises high above them. The pagoda spire holds aloft a splendid golden crown, from which hundreds of bells hang in seven tiers. The sound of their chiming, as the fresh morning breeze plays over them, is more beautiful than I can describe. So many tones fill the air—all blending into one ceaseless melody—like New Year bells at home, if you hear them from a great distance.

Steps lead up into the shrine between figures of *Chintey*, *Belus* and *Nats*†, and past great Buddha-

* Map, Square B. V.

† Lions, ogres and godlings.



HOPONG PAGODA.



A SHAN WELL.



images, into a dark chamber in the depths of the Pagoda. Here, the Buddhas can only be seen dimly. Further on, it is pitch dark, until gradually one's eyes get accustomed to the gloom. Then a faint, golden light seems to fall upon the calm Buddha-faces round about. Still a little further on there is a shadowy suggestion of an arch, and a dim, golden-face beyond it.

In Burmese times, walls were decorated with glass. Dancing figures were placed on bridges and water-weirs. The balustrades of stair-ways were shaped to represent dragons. Doors were beautified with masonry flames. Here, in the Shan States, arches were put up over water-springs, and bridges were roofed with tiles. Buildings were intended to be pleasing as well as useful, and this indulgence in a little imagination cost practically nothing. What a difference it would make if all the bridges, culverts, and gate-posts which we have built, expressed this sentiment of Burma! It would not be without political value. In India, public buildings are now decorated with domes and minarets, to harmonize with the old architecture of the country. Perhaps one day some far-seeing statesman will introduce a similar reform into Burma also. The P. W. D. can never do it on its own. It is an organism without soul. Left to itself, it would produce 'regulation' *Behus*, and 'sealed pattern' *Nats*, which would be even more awful than its present severely practical and alien style.

I abandoned my cycle in Hopong rest-house and took to a pony. On the third day out from Taunggyi

I came to the Military Police post at Loilem, where Captain Kenny lent me his house. Beyond that, the country is open for many days. It suggests space and freedom. The wide green landscape is empty and almost uninhabited, except where red squares of ploughland show that villagers are cultivating there. But villages are few and far between, and the population of these rolling table-lands is small. I only met a few bullock-carts, which invariably swung round and tried to hit me with their tail ends. Occasionally, I overtook a drove of pack-bullocks. They all shied into the road, completely blocking it. The animals in rear began to trot, each butting the next with its heavy basket, until the whole 40 or 50 in a bunch were straining to push each other over a cliff. On narrow roads there is nothing for it, but to wait for the next bit of open country before passing them. The two leading bullocks often carry bells which harmonize with each other. You can hear these bells going *ting-tong, ting-tong, ting-tong*, a mile off. The great Shan table-land, where we are now crossing it, is about 3,000 feet high. Its open, undulating surface is covered with grass. Firewood and water are plentiful. The soil is fertile, and the climate is good. The country only needs a population to exploit it.

Here and there, rocks crop out, sometimes forming single hills, and sometimes rising in small ranges. The cliffs, precipices and peaks of these miniature mountains stand out boldly above the plain, or spread their fantastic outlines along the horizon.



THE HO-HKO BRIDGE, KENG TUNG.



THE SALWEEN RIVER AT TAKAW.

No extensive jungles occur until Kunhing is reached. Kunhing is quite a beauty-spot. The rest-house stands beside the Nam Pang River where it flows down between a number of little islands. This river leaps bodily over a cliff some miles further down. The falls are difficult to reach, and are therefore not often visited ; but they are said to be very imposing.

Two days later, on the 2nd August, we reached the Salween at a place called Takaw.* The first view of the Salween River from the rest-house on the western bank is superb. Great rugged mountains tower up on all sides. The Salween sweeps down the valley with tremendous velocity. Across the water, a deep gorge occurs in the opposite mountains, through which our road passes to Keng Tung.

We crossed over in a dug-out. For the transport of animals at the ferry, two dug-outs are lashed together, and a bamboo platform is laid across them. The ponies did not like this kind of raft very much. The Salween River was in full flood. At low water there are sand-banks and cliffs. All that was gone now. Even the lower branches of trees along the cliffs were submerged. Frothy water swept menacingly down through the hills. We had some difficulty in finding a place to land at on the far bank.

The Shan word *Ta* means 'a ferry.' Its inclusion in the name of any place may indicate the existence of a ferry, as here at *Takaw* (Pebble-ferry), or at *Ta Purm*

* Map, Square C. U.

and *Ta Phing* in the north, or at *Ta-Kyi-Lik* on the Siamese border. There is a small Military Police post near the Salween ferry at a village called Nam-maw-ngin. The name means 'water-bowl-silver', or, shall we say, 'The Silver Spring.'

This eastern Burmese border is in some respects unique. Nowhere else on earth are so many kinds of different races collected in so small an area. Nowhere else are so many languages spoken. Nowhere else do the world's loftiest philosophies mix more inconsequently with the simplest beliefs of animism. Nowhere else are three of the world's greatest rivers crowded into a space of 48 miles.

In the north, just a little off the top of my map, the Salween, Mekong and Yang-tze Rivers, having converged from the wastes of Tibet, flow from Lat. 30 to Lat. 27 in three long parallel lines, each divided from the other by high mountain ranges. At one point, the distance between the Salween and the Mekong is only 20 miles, and between the Mekong and Yang-tze 28 miles. Then these three rivers separate, to find the sea at such widely distant places as Moulmein, Saigong, and Shanghai.*

The Salween is a much lower and possibly a much older river than the other two. At points where they are crossed by the Teng-Yueh Tali-Fu road, the Salween is

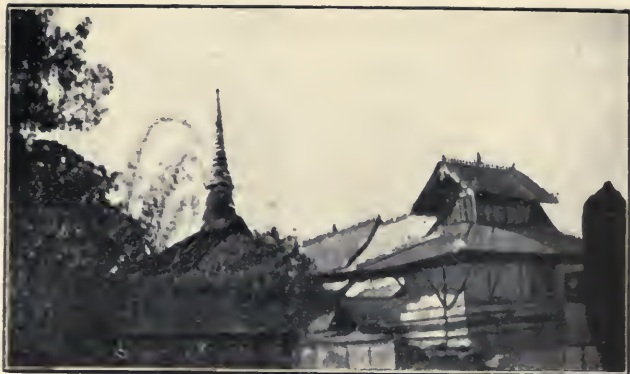
* " *A Burmese Enchantment*," p. 191.

1,700 feet lower than the Mekong. Here, at Takaw, the Salween bed is 812 feet above sea-level. It is more than 500 feet lower than the Mekong, which is 1,329 feet at Chieng Lap in nearly the same latitude. The Salween has cut a deep, narrow trough into the old palæozoic rock. It passes down a gigantic trench from north to south with wonderful directness. It emerges into no plain, until it has almost reached Moulmein and the sea. Much of its upper course is inhabited by head-hunting *Wa*, and other wild tribes, and therefore remains unexplored. It has few tributaries. In its higher reaches, above Lat. 28, the Salween, it is said, travels through arid gorges, where only a few inches of rain fall in the year. But below that, its wet, tropical situation subjects it to immense floods, such as I witnessed now. The hot, low, narrow valley of the Salween—the lowest point in all this journey—is full of luxuriant tropical foliage, where wonderful birds and butterflies abound.

* * * * *

My party was still almost the same as that which followed me through *A Burmese Enchantment*. The two Burmans, Maung Po Myit and Maung Hkin, and my devoted Chinaman, Chau Sheh Chwen, accompanied me still on the new adventure. Later on, another Chinaman, Lau Syau, an ex-soldier, came in too. Only Tsau Nong, the Kachin orderly, had remained behind in Myitkyina: and Sepoy Hassan Gul had gone to his Afridi home in Tirah to shoot a troublesome enemy.

The cart-road ends at the Salween. Beyond that there is only a mule-path. Keng Tung is still 8 marches distant. We reached it on the 10th August, 1915. For these last 101 miles, the mule-path passes through hilly country, much of which is very beautiful—especially at Murng Pying, where the rest-house overlooks the Nam Pying River as it loops across a little plain. It is pleasant to halt there a day or two, watching the villagers bathe, and the buffaloes wade across the stream. From Toang Ta the road rises sharply through pine forests to the crest of the Kiulong ridge (6,500 feet), which is generally considered the 'divide' between the Salween and Mekong basins. The crest is finely wooded with big trees. Thence we descended the Pang-sang gorge, and passed out of the hills beneath the little gold pagoda, which guards from evil influences the entrance to the Keng Tung plain.



WAT TSAWM TAWNG, KENG TUNG.



PORCH OF THE MAWK MAI *Kyaung*, KENG TUNG.

CHAPTER II.

KENG TUNG—ITS FESTIVALS.

KENG TUNG is the largest of the Southern Shan States. It is bounded east and west by the Mekong and Salween Rivers. It occupies the great salient, where Burma reaches out to the Mekong. The capital town of Keng Tung lies about mid-way between the two rivers, and, as I have said, is roughly 300 miles east of Taunggyi.

We now pronounce the word Keng Tung as we spell it. The Tai Shans *do* appear to say *Keng*: but the Hkeun, and others call it *Tsieng Toong* or *Chieng Toong*. Our neighbours, the French, have got much closer to the native word than we have by spelling it *Xieng Toung*.

The town of Keng Tung is surrounded by the ruins of an old city wall. But it is not at all cramped on that account. Indeed, the wall is much too big for the town. Scattered houses and monasteries are spread about amidst large trees. Sombre tile-roofs and sweeping gables show here and there through the foliage. Keng Tung revives memories of Kyoto, the capital of Old Japan, which is also one of those rural towns where you step from the main street into jungle, and thence following a lane, reach some quiet old shrine. A few stairs

lead up into it. The interior is cool and dim. Slender gold and red pillars lose themselves in the dusky roofs.

Keng Tung can boast of no artist as great as the Japanese master *Kano Moto-nobo*, but the decorations on the walls, gates and ceilings of its shrines are very fine all the same. The spiritual aspirations of the Shans have found expression through the blending of many influences. The art of Burma has mingled here with that of China, Tibet, and Siam. Among the rich carvings you will find many Chinese symbols, such as the *Yang* and the *Yin*, a circle divided equally by a curved line. The two divisions thus formed are sometimes given eyes, and turned into fish, making a connection (through Nestorian agency) with the fish on the walls of the Catacombs of Rome. All sorts of animals, real and mythical, are painted and carved on walls and altars. The *Nats*, *Nagars* and *Ka-lones** of Burma spread themselves in glittering designs of glass and gold, both inside and outside the pagodas. Those well-known Chinese symbols, the stork and the tortoise, stand everywhere for luck and long-life. In the *Wat Chin Ngam* Pagoda the three-armed Japanese *Swastica* is found. The true *Swastica* is not very common in any Keng Tung Pagoda. In the same shrine—the *Chin Ngam*—are foxes, recalling *Inari* of Japan. Elsewhere, great numbers of dragons, lions, serpents, cocks, hares, ‘Heavenly dogs’ and human-headed birds (called *Kēy-nă-yars*) are plentifully

* Godlings, dragons, and mythical figures.



WAT IN, KENG TUNG.
(Buddhist symbols before an altar.)



WAT CHING YEUN, KENG TUNG.

depicted. Just now, at the full moon of *Tha-din-jut*, we are reminded that the Burmese say there is a hare in the moon.

Some of the finest doors in Keng Tung are decorated with be-jewelled peacocks, their necks entwined. The altars are high platforms, beautifully ornamented with glass mosaic, and filled with images of the Buddha. Exquisitely carved tables are placed in front of every altar, upon which the people lay their offerings of fruit and flowers. Before the tables, small wooden elephants and horses are always stood in pairs. The horse is the horse *Kantika*, upon which Buddha fled from his palace at the 'Great Renunciation.' The elephant is the White Elephant *Pisa-ya*, which he gave away in charity during his incarnation as *King Wethandaya*. So these two little figures are placed there to recall two great Buddha stories.

On one side of each altar is a sort of 'pulpit,' or reading desk, for the use of the monks, or *phoongyis*. All these 'pulpits' differ in design, and some are extremely handsome. Along another side of the main altar is always placed a rack with poles standing in it. Each pole bears a symbol. Of these symbols six, namely, the umbrella, fish, vase, lotus, conch, and gordian-knot, are found also in Tibet.* Here, in Keng Tung, there are many other symbols besides, such as swords, dragons,

* See my "*Realm of the Gods*," p. 158.

hares, and a clenched fist holding a ring. No one ever gave me a satisfactory explanation of this clenched fist.

All the things I have mentioned above are found in every Shan '*Kyaung*.' There is little variation, except as regards some of the images of minor local saints. You may perhaps find an ugly little image with a huge nose and a lotus-leaf cap. Turning him upside down, you will see fish and lotus carved underneath. He is *Paung Daw U*, and is supposed to be seated in a lotus pond. Another common image is that of a fat, jovial old fellow called *Maha Kachai*. He may clasp his hands complacently over his immense belly, or he may rest one hand on his knee. He has these two attitudes. *Maha Kachai* is really the Chinese God of Wealth. Here, he is only a sort of Saint. In China he is called *Hotei*, and leans contentedly on money bags. The best image of him in Keng Tung is a merry, life-size figure in the *Wat Pa-Leng*, which is the great Chinese shrine. Out in the district, on the Chinese border, monasteries like those at Mung Yang are simply packed with hundreds of images of *Maha Kachai*. This same Keng Tung Saint has found his way even to Japan, where, as *Dai-ko-ku*,* you find him laughing at you in the water-mark of a five-yen note, if you hold it up to the light.

According to the Shan legend, *Maha Kachai* was a disciple of the Buddha. It is said that he was so beautiful

* *Dai* in Japanese means *great*: and so, of course, does *Maha* in Pali.



PAGODA STEPS, KENG TUNG.



Maha Kachai : IN THE CHINESE MONASTERY
WAT PA-LENG, KENG TUNG.



that the women paid special attention to him when making their offerings, neglecting even the Buddha. Therefore *Maha Kachai*, being anxious to escape these attentions and lead the life of a *yahan*, made himself fat and ugly.

Another very common image is that of *Ma-thone-da-ya*, who wrings out her wet hair like rain, in allusion to the 'drops of water' which Buddha sprinkled when making his supreme offering as *King Wethandaya*. Afterwards, when Buddha won 'Enlightenment' under the Bodhi Tree, the Buddhist Evil-One, Mara, claimed the throne upon which Buddha sat cross-legged. But Buddha put down one hand and touched the ground, calling upon Mother-Earth to bear witness of the merit he had acquired as *King Wethandaya*. In that 'earth-touching attitude,' nearly all Buddha figures in Burma are depicted. Thus appealed to, *Ma-thone-da-ya*, the Mother-Earth, wrung out her long wet hair as a sign, and rain fell in refreshing showers.

Pegasus, the flying horse, is found in at least four places in Keng Tung. He is no less Greek than the very Buddha images themselves, which owe their grace and dignity to the art of men who followed Alexander the Great to India two thousand years ago.* I would also call special attention to the row of winged 'Atlantes' on the floor of the *Wat Yan-Kone*, who seem to support the weight of the altar. They are related very decidedly

* See " *A Burmese Enchantment*," page 271.

to the Græco-Buddhist art of Gandhara (N. W. India), where also they perform this same duty of supporting the weight of columns and cornices.

The dim splendour of these vast pagodas, and the atmosphere of repose that fills them, is immensely soothing. Petty troubles vanish under the restful influence of this accumulated merit of centuries. A peace of mind accompanies you hence, back into the daily toil of the outer world. This festival night of the *Tha-din-jut* full-moon, I have wandered from one pagoda to another, following the streams of people who are making similar pilgrimages to place candles in the various shrines. This festival is called the *Mee-pu-zaw*, or 'fire offering.' The light of innumerable lanterns and candles falls softly upon the pretty silk dresses of the women. The faces of the Buddhas, and the rich interiors of these shrines, gleam with a mellow glow. It is an enchantment which lasts for only this one night, but its memory suffices for the rest of the year.

In one pagoda we meet *Sau Nang Hkan Hkam*, the Sawbwa's sister, making her pilgrimage with a picturesque following of servants, torch-bearers, umbrellas and rickshaws. She is a dignified little lady, exquisitely dressed in light blue silk. She shakes hands, says a few pleasant words, and passes out, leaving the altar brighter for the glittering candles she has added. A special dispensation preserves the people and their timber shrines from fire this night. The children play with

the lights, spilling grease over their best clothes. The crowds as they enter *shiko*, and add more candles. The men are finely dressed in pink silk turbans, white jackets, and loose brocaded *baumbis*, or trousers. The women always unbind their turbans when they bow before the Buddhas. Their tight linen jackets carry you in imagination to old Burma, where these same jackets were worn, before the loose and more graceful Chinese jacket, or *Tayok Aingyi*, came into fashion. Their silk skirts are striped round with bands of black, red, and green.

Outside, it is dreamland. The streets are illuminated. The sweeping tile roofs blend admirably with the warm glow of paper lanterns. The tiles lose half their sombre charm in day-light, when the broad streets are empty and untidy. But to-night, for this one night of the *Tha-din-jut* full-moon, Keng Tung is faultless. The quiet night air is full of gentle voices and happy laughter. Great lanterns, shaped like birds and fish, float overhead, waving their paper feathers and fins in every breath of night air. Stately pine torches, twenty feet high, burn at street corners. Small merry-go-rounds, each driven by the hot air of a lamp, cast moving shadows of men, horses, and elephants on a screen. The whole scene is a blending of individual effort. Old and young, all are children to-night, lighting up the house fronts. A paper pagoda is placed out in the road opposite each home. It answers the purpose of a Christmas tree, for it is illuminated, and hung over with presents, and has been a theme of excitement and labour for days.

The happiness of the grown-ups is real. There are no liverish old uncles here, being boisterously seasonable. The grey old people are, indeed, more incorrigibly earnest than the children. We are now entering the court of the *Wat-in* Pagoda, where big fire-balloons are being got ready. The mouth of each is held over a fire until the balloon is well inflated with hot air. A torch of oily rags is placed inside it, and lit. The glow of the balloon lights up the eager faces of the men holding it. Squibs and rockets are tied to its tail. Then it rises into the still night air, until an upper breeze carries it away. The squibs splutter, and the rockets fall like liquid stars. The second balloon catches fire. Flames clamber up it. It sinks, slowly at first, then faster and faster, till the oily torch detaches itself. The yells of house-owners show where it has fallen. All night long fire-balloons sail up, and fire-fountains play near every monastery. Not for another whole year is the enchantment of this night renewed.

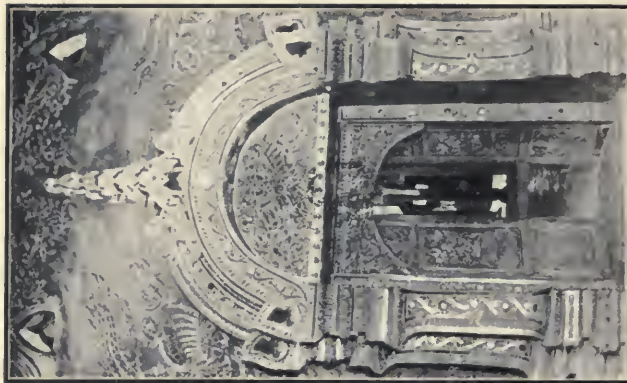
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There is continual festival in the days that follow the 'Fire Offering.' Lines of bamboo posts are set up in the streets. Each post is filled with gun-powder, and all are connected together with a slow-tape. When lit, the bamboos blow up in quick succession with loud bangs, hurling splinters and small boys in all directions, and scattering the delighted crowds.

A *Wingaba*, or maze, is set up in the open space before the Sawbwa's palace. Perhaps I should explain



THE 'LIBRARY'—HO KOANG PAGODA,
KENG TUNG.



BEJEWELLED GATE—WAT IN PAGODA,
KENG TUNG.

(The influence acting upon the architecture of Keng Tung is as much Chinese as Burmese.)

that the Buddha in his incarnation as *King Wethandaya* was driven out, and forced to wander in a forest on the *Wingaba Hill*. The *Wingaba* now set up is a maze of hurdles, with a shrine in the middle. People who reach the shrine make an offering there. But many little women wander about in the maze lost, calling for help, until they are quite tired and tearful. For three nights, festival is held round the *Wingaba*. The Sawbwa and his family sit in a pavilion. The slopes round about the maze are banked with faces and silk turbans. Villagers come in from all the country round. This dense crowd of twenty thousand people collects at no other time in Keng Tung. "See how good they are," says the Sawbwa proudly. And, indeed, it is true. In all that crowd there are no police at all, and there is no need for them!! Each village, and each quarter of Keng Tung, sends an image, such as a dragon, *Nat*, tiger, bear, peacock, boat, or *Kēy-nā-yar* (human-bird). All these images move in procession round and round the *Wingaba*. As they pass the Sawbwa's pavilion, the strange animals bow and *shiko*. The ship rocks, the buffaloes fight, and the human-birds dance, swaying their glittering wings. As darkness falls, great pine torches blaze out over the crowd.

"It is lucky the Forest Officer cannot see those torches," says the Sawbwa, with a quiet smile.

"But of course you protect the pines?" I reply.

"Oh, of course."

"And you discourage pine torches?"

"Oh yes, rather."

Presently the Sawbwa's women make a pilgrimage to the *Wingaba*. His wife the *Maha Devi*, his sister the *Sau Nang Hkan Hkam*, and his determined old mother the *Mey Daw*, lead off with the Sawbwa's small children. It is really charming to watch this procession of dainty little ladies, with lamps and great umbrellas, winding in and out through the maze towards the little gold Buddha in the centre.

All the titles just mentioned are rather picturesque. The word *Sawbwa* is derived from *Sau* (a lord): and *hpa* (heaven): i.e., the 'Lord of Heaven.' *Sawbwa* is a Burmese corruption of the Shan word. The original Shan title was *Sau-yot-hka-mom*. The Sawbwa's wife's title, *Maha Devi*, is, of course, Pali, and means 'Great Princess.' I do not know the meaning of the word *Hkan* in his sister's title, but the rest of it—*Sau* (lord): *Nang* (princess): *Hkam* (golden), means the 'Royal Golden Princess.' His mother's title is Burmese, *Mey Daw*, and means 'Mother Royal.' Indian titles (of course of Pali origin) are in common use. Thus the Superintendent and Political Officer is called *Shan Pyee Dek-hki-na Htana joak Woon Min Gyi*—or the 'Official of the *Dek-hki-na* (or Southern) Shan Country.' The Sawbwa himself discards his other titles in favour of *Maha Ratana*, or 'Great Jewel.'

The Sawbwa's two eldest sons have been educated in the college for Shan Chiefs in Taunggyi. *Sau Hpom Leur*, the son of the *Maha Devi*, is a shy, retiring lad of



SAU KAWNG TAI.
The son of the Keng Tung Sawbwa (A HKEUN SHAN).



KENG TUNG SHANS.

about eighteen. Sau Kawng Tai, who is the son of another wife, is a month or so older than his half-brother. He is a keen, intelligent boy, with considerable *savoir faire*.

* * * * *

On the outskirts of the crowd booths are set up, where you find four or five hundred men gambling. The Shans, when allowed to gamble (and also I suppose when not allowed,) play like gentlemen. There is none of the quarrelling and *dhar* drawing, which has made gambling so disastrous amongst the Burmese. The usual game played here is a simple stake on odds or evens. A player throws down his stake, crying '*lam lam*'—which means 'black,' or 'evens.' A man betting on 'odds' turning up, covers the stake with the same number of rupees. The table merely takes a percentage. I have seen thirty and forty rupees staked at a time; and occasionally rings, watches and coats are hawked about for sale by unlucky players. Little boys play a grave game with pice, betting on the turning up of the fish, dragon, hare, toad, or *chintey*.* There are also more complicated games played on long clean strips of matting.

Gambling is in the blood of all Chinese and allied people. The Shans are very fond of quiet lotteries on the *Thone-sey Chauk gaung* (the 36 animals). The banker chooses an animal, and locks its picture up in a

* A fabulous lion.

box. Then every one backs his fancy. The banker gives 'tips' which, of course, are misleading, for he wants everyone to lose. So there is much merriment till the box is opened. Then the word "horse! horse!" goes round the town like wildfire, and all who backed the horse come and claim their prize.

I have seen a Chinaman stake his last garment at dice, regardless of the consequences. Luckily he won, and subsequently redeemed his coat also. The Burmese are such excitable players that gambling amongst them has had to be entirely prohibited. I would not infer for a moment that it does not still continue. Now and then a Burmese club is successfully raided, and rather a queer crowd caught red-handed. Praise falls in the quarter where it is due. The learned Judge imposes a crushing fine, which is paid with surprising ease. There is nothing to show that the whole thing was a put up job—but, on the other hand, there is nothing to show that it was not.

* * * * *

The Sawbwa of Keng Tung, Sau Kwan Kiao Intaleng, is one of the most charming, simple princes I ever met. "Shall I come and see you, or will you come round to me?" he writes—and that explains (especially to those who know the petty pomposity of Indian Chiefs) how little regard he has for forms and ceremonies. Asked at the Delhi Durbar what he thought about it, he quietly replied "Truly, we are only monkeys in our jungle out

there.” Asked on another occasion, when there had been a little deal in opium, whether he would pay a fine or forfeit his salute, he is said to have decided promptly to forfeit the salute !

His attitude towards his people is that of a fatherly country squire. He is an indulgent master, and a shrewd, practical business man. When it was remarked to him that he had given no relief to a famine-stricken village, he replied :—“They have not asked. The breast is only thrust to children who scream.” He is very near to the people. He knows many of them by name or by sight ; and apparently they are free to wander in and out of the palace as they please. The Sawbwa has a motor cycle which he rides very slowly. Several attendants usually accompany him on bicycles. On other occasions he always appears with his royal umbrella, and with a large golden cigar box. Sawbwa Ratana now (in 1917) is 43 years old. He succeeded in 1897.

The *Tabaung* festival falls at the full moon in March. On this occasion the Sawbwa, and all the town people, go out and camp in the dry paddy fields for a few days. Paper pagodas, or *pya-thats*, are carried out. Rockets are fired, and the usual gambling indulged in for a space of four or five days (or more if no one is looking). It is a great picnic festival, where boisterous parties have their meals at little tables in Chinese eating-booths.

The *Tagoo* festival follows a month later in April, just when the summer drought ends with the first showers of the Rains. The Sawbwa always holds a *gadaw*, or ceremony of obeisance, at this season. Europeans do not often attend the *gadaw*, but I was once specially invited. It was a solemn business. The Sawbwa sat cross-legged on his throne—motionless as an image, utterly unresponsive to *shikos*, or to the interminable sing-song speeches of his *Hpayas*, or Ministers. He was splendidly dressed in a royal Burmese costume, and wore a winged crown on his head. Presently he delivered a blessing in Pali. The doors behind his throne opened, and he vanished through them.

Instantly, the solemn assembly rose up, and fled from the palace in utter disorder. The reason for this strange behaviour was soon apparent. The *Tagoo* is the 'Water Festival.' It is the custom for the town-folk to besiege the palace during the *gadaw*, and to mercilessly duck the assembly with buckets and squirts as it emerges in its best clothes. The Sawbwa now appeared at my side, watched my indecision, laughed, and suggested retreat by the back door. Of course such cowardice was impossible. But woe betide the fool who lingers to retaliate. Buckets and squirts only concentrate on him, and he is drowned. So ended the *gadaw*, and the water ran down from my heels as I rode home.

On the first day of this 'Water Festival,' a procession called the *Thin-chyan*, passes through the town, and is



THE FORD, KENG TUNG.



SHAN TOMBS, KENG TUNG.

squirted at from the houses on both sides of the street as it goes. The Sawbwa kindly invited me to watch it from his garden wall, where his small son worked a specially villainous pump and hose. Incidents in this procession suggest phallic cult, though possibly of Tai Loi and not of Shan origin. It is said that the shape of Shan tombs is also an expression of phallic influence.

Tagoo is the Burmese New Year. Some people say that water is thrown about to cool the World, because the *Thagya Min** descends from his Heaven at this parched season, to succour the Earth. This benevolent Being, whose name means ‘*King who Knows and Hears*,’ is filled with compassion for humanity. He knows upon his throne whenever the World needs encouragement. It was he who taught the Buddha the *Truth of the Middle-way*. Appearing as a minstrel, he played his guitar first with slack strings, and then with tense ones, and then again with moderate strings. So the Buddha understood that contentment and harmony arise from moderation, and not from the extremes of either luxury or austerity. And no doubt the water thrown at *Tagoo*, which is sprinkled to prepare Earth for its Celestial visitor, has an older significance too, and is merely the survival of an ancient rite for invoking rain. For this is the end of a season of long drought, when ‘Mango

* The word *Thagya* is derived from the Burmese *thi* to know : and *chya* to hear.

Showers' have just begun to refresh and moisten the dusty ground. The hills are washed with deep colours. The pall of dust and smoke, into which the sun has sunk for weeks like a sullen red moon, is swept away, leaving the atmosphere clear and clean. It is a season of hope. Orchids bloom on the tiled roofs of Keng Tung. The trees burst into leaf, and the suffering earth is shot over with grass blades. A good, rich smell fills the air. A month later, at the full-moon of *Ka-hsone*, the *Thagya Min*, his mission fulfilled, passes up into his Paradise again. Soon afterwards, the wet fields are covered with a green delicate sheen of young rice, and the thunder of the heavy Rains snaps and crackles across the leaden sky.



THE MARKET—AI SAI AND MAUNG PO MYIT—KENG TUNG.



THE SAWBWA'S RETURN FROM THE HOT-SPRINGS, KENG TUNG.

CHAPTER III.

KENG TUNG—ITS MARKET.

KENG TUNG lies out in an open plain which is dry and brown in winter. But in August, when the country is flooded, the wet fields spread like a shimmering lake to the distant mountains which encircle the plain on all sides. Embankments radiate from the city in various directions, and do duty for roads. But they are only indifferent roads. The bridges are always broken, for their old timber is nearly withered away. Buffaloes wallow in the path, and rise with a 'pop' from the stiff clay as you approach. There is no room for ponies who shy; and most of them *do* shy at buffaloes. Later on, I shall explain why they do so.

Keng Tung, I have said, is surrounded by a wall and a moat. But the crumbling brick battlements are so over-grown with jungle, that the walls are only visible when the vegetation dies down in the dry season. Keng Tung is really a collection of villages within these walls. The Sawbwa's *Haw*, or palace, the market, a lake, and some big monasteries are in the middle. If you expect to see crowded streets, you will be disappointed. It is, as I have said, a sleepy, rural town like Kyoto, and you can step straight out of the main street into the solitude

of the *Wat In* pagoda, where bells chime softly from a spire, where everything slumbers in the deep shade of bamboos, and where cherry trees graciously shower their blossoms on the ground. The charm of Keng Tung does not leap all at once to your eyes. Indeed, the first impression is one of disappointment. Delight only grows when you search through the town for quiet corners, quaint steps and porches, sweeping weathered eaves and roofs, old pagodas, *Nats* and *Ta-goan-daign* masts, bejewelled walls and doors, and groups of Buddhas.

But here I must dwell on a less pleasing aspect of the business quarters of Keng Tung, in order to give a correct general impression of the place. Just as the town does not nearly fill the area within its fortifications, so too the people do not nearly fill the town. As a stage in day-light is desolate without actors, so Keng Tung is dreary and fly-blown when marketers and travellers have gone away. Pitiless sunshine then glares down upon the litter of paper and leaves in the empty market. Pink, hairless dogs sit about, scratching their sores, or bay and yowl at the moon at night. Mules kick up clouds of dust as they return in the evening from grazing. Surra-stricken ponies wander about the roads, seeking some really central place to die in.

Fairs are held every fifth day in the market place. At least, it would be more correct to say that fairs are *supposed* to take place every fifth day, but a Holy day,

or a festival, nearly always intervenes. So if you go with a feeling that a crowd is the last little thing in the world you expect to see, you may get right into the middle of one. By some occult means the hill people guess market days, and here they all are in one jostling, merry throng of Shans, Burmese, Chinese, Kaw, Wa, Muhso, and Siamese. You can get an artist to paint all the different types for you in a little book, and you should do so if you wish to learn your own profound ignorance about your neighbours. You will understand then why, after 30 years, Government does not yet know how many tribes it rules in Upper Burma, or what languages they speak. The first stage of the Linguistic Survey, which was completed in 1917, brought to light over a hundred languages and dialects, *of which no previous record existed*. Here before you, in the Keng Tung market-place, are a few—a very few—of these almost unknown fellow subjects:—Tai, Leur, Hkeun, Lem, Lao and Yoon: Kaw, Muhso, Kwi and Ako: Palaung, En, Wa, Tai Loi.

It should be explained that the Shan tribes (*i.e.*, Tai, Leur, Hkeun, Lem, Lao, and Yoon) occupy, as a general rule, the plains and big valleys, while the rest are comparatively wild hill-folk, spread in little communities throughout the wooded mountains of the State. The Chinese call the Shans 'Bai-yee'—a term derived from the words 'Pa-yee,' meaning 'Plain Barbarians.' The Shans spread beyond our territory right across Southern Yünnan, and into Kwang Hsi. In Yünnan

they are said to be even more numerous than the Lolo, and are known as Nung-jen : Sha-jen : Tu-Lao and Bai-yee.

Here in Keng Tung the Shans are the predominant people, and the only local ones with whom we have any real dealings. So I shall have more to say about them in the next chapter.

The hill-people with whom we are concerned in this State are grouped in the Census Report* under two families, namely the Lolo Group and the Palaung Wa Group.

The true Lolo, who form a large proportion of the hill population of Yünnan, are not found in any numbers in Burma, but their cousins, the Kaw and Muhso, are the most numerous of all the hill-people of Keng Tung. The Kwi and Ako are included in this family. The Kaw and Muhso are pretty generally distributed between the Salween and Mekong rivers, and as we see more of the Kaw than of any of the rest, I shall describe them more fully on page 135.

The Palaung Wa Group includes the Palaung, En, Wa, Tai Loi, and others.

The *Wa* now occupy the hills in the north. The Chinese call them *Lau-wa*. These Wa are fortunately 'tame', as distinct from the Wa of the Wa States who are 'wild.' Being head-hunters, the Wild Wa are most

* Census Report for 1911, Vol. IX, pages 263 & 277.

undesirable neighbours. The Wa are animists. They and the Lahu are the special victims of the American Baptist Mission. Like the Kachins, they take readily to Christianity. Large numbers of them live across our northern border in Yünnan.

A people called the *Tai Loi* (or *Sam Tau*) are believed to be of Wa origin. But they are now Buddhists, and are comparatively civilized. That a *Tai Loi* is always chosen to masquerade in the phalic procession at the New Year festival in Keng Tung, seems to indicate the existence amongst them formerly of phalic cult. Another curious custom is still observed in connection with the Wa. When a Sawbwa of Keng Tung succeeds to the throne, two Wa are invited to his palace, and there feasted. Subsequently they are driven out with violence. It is possible that we see here a reference to an expulsion of the Wa from the plains by the Hkeun Shans.

The Wild Wa—to the great amusement of the Shans—claim connection with the Sawbwa of Keng Tung. The claim is not without its uses. The other day two Shans, who were captured for sacrifice, owed their release to this supposed relationship.

The human heads for which the Wild Wa hunt annually, are required for sacrifice to their *Nats*, or Spirits, at ploughing time. One head is offered in each village. The victim's body is cooked and eaten. If possible, a stranger is caught. Otherwise, they take a head from a neighbouring Wa village : and failing even

in that, they sacrifice the oldest man of their own community. If a village fails to catch a stranger, its people are strictly denied entrance to any neighbouring village till they have provided for their sacrifice—a precaution which seems hardly unreasonable.

Until recently, the Wa in administered territory, who are unable now to hunt, bought up the heads of criminals executed in Keng Tung, paying any reasonable price for them.

The Shans themselves offer an annual sacrifice of two pigs and a buffalo to the Lake *Nat*, Town *Nat*, and Market *Nat* of Keng Tung. The sacrifice is made on a larger scale every third year, when each man, woman, and child (not excluding even the Sawbwa himself) contributes one pice to expenses. Every third year also, Evil Spirits are officially expelled from Keng Tung.

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The *Yang Set* are now adopting Shan customs. They have a settlement near Keng Tung in a village which, by reason of two fine trees there, is called Wan Mai-hoong Peenong (Village Banyans Brotherly).

The *En* have a curious custom of not dividing the property of their dead until the spirit of the deceased is re-born. The re-incarnation then distributes the inheritance himself. There is an En Village at Wan Pung-hawng.

* * * * *



MIAO.



KWI.

Keng Tung Types.

The *Miao* are a people apart by themselves. They appear to be natives of the Chinese province of Kueichou who entered Yünnan only three or four generations ago.* There are very few of them in British territory, but last year (1916) a whole village of Miao trekked from Yünnan into Keng Tung, and camped there near our house, until land was given them to settle on just below Loimwe.

The non-Chinese inhabitants of east and south-east Yünnan belong to three families, namely, Lolo, Shan, and Miao. The Miao are found also in the wild province of Kwang Hsi, where the Taiping rebellion originated. The Miao are called Miao-tzu or Miao-chia by the Chinese. They are divided into clans known as black, white, and coloured. They live very much apart by themselves on mountain tops, and appear to have taken only recently to wandering. It is said that at the birth of a child the father retires to bed with it for a period. However, very little information is available concerning the Miao. Since they seem to have begun to wander, it is probable that their numbers in British India will increase.

It is not too much to say that nothing at all is really known of all these hill people. There are so many essential languages to learn, that no one ever has time to study non-essential ones. So far as I know, no Englishman has ever learned *Kaw*, though we claim

* Census Report for 1911, p. 279.

33,000 Kaws as fellow subjects. These shy tribes live their own happy lives, utterly removed from us and from the Shans. If they have internal affairs, they settle them themselves. They never refer to our courts, or to the Sawbwa's. They never use our posts or our telegraphs. They sometimes come to hospital, but only as a last resort. They mingle with us in the great crowd of the market, but their ways and their talk are their own. They are neighbours to us only in the same way as animals are. If you studied them deeply for several years, you could discover which tribes bury their dead, and which burn them, or which eat this or that beastliness. You would trace certain word affinities leading to a bottomless pit of speculation. There is little reward in such research unless it is scientifically conducted. These are hill and forest people who found a means of livelihood long ago. Nothing has since obliged them to change their mode of life, and consequently they have no history to record. They are extremely primitive. No change can ever occur from inside. They distrust novelty and suppress it. There is no scope for individuality to assert itself. They are compact communities, busy about their communal needs, using instinct rather than brain, all co-operating on a dead-level like ants, and showing in the case of the Kaw, Wild Wa, and others, a remarkable capacity to resist absorption by their more virile Shan and Chinese neighbours. Scores and scores of such tribes live thus, buried in the jungle, surrounded by the

great civilizations of China, Burma, and the Shan plains, but shut out from them. No one knows really where they came from. They have no coherent tradition themselves. In the midst of historical people, they are without history. Some of these tribes are very picturesque, and many of the women are loaded with silver jewelry. Nearly all may be distinguished by their dress. Each tribe makes haversacks which are peculiarly their own. It is only by coming here that you can see these folk. People think they see them at big durbars in Mandalay and Delhi, when 'types' are brought down for show. The truth is that nothing short of wild elephants would drag certain 'types' from their native hills, even to meet a Viceroy. No bribe could lure them before a camera, or into a *fire carriage*. What, then, are the 'types' seen at durbars? Who are the wild tribes photographed there? Naturally, I cannot possibly answer that. That any deception should be practised is of course unthinkable!!

While this extraordinary isolation exists in the forest-covered hills, an exactly opposite process is going forward in the plains and valleys, where communication and intercourse are easy. Here, a ceaseless fusion of tribes is going on, with a tendency for the weaker ones to be absorbed by the stronger. Mixed marriages are common, and bring such fusion rapidly to completion. But in many cases absorption is quite as thoroughly effected without any mixing of blood at all, when small tribes merely adopt the language, customs, and religion of

their virile neighbours. The transition is then so easy and so rapid, that in two or three generations the people entirely forget that originally they were something else. Whether these are aboriginal tribes, whether they are the shipwrecked fragments of ancient emigrations, or whether they have been forced into the remote hills by stress of circumstances, are problems urgently needing scientific examination. The opportunity of solution is rapidly passing away. As communications improve, as trade and enlightenment spread, these tribes tend to be absorbed, until at last their language, traditions, and customs disappear altogether.

The Chinese, Burmese, Shans, and Kachins possess (in that order) this capacity to absorb their neighbours. The Kachins in the Myitkyina hills have strongly impressed their language on the Marus and Atsis. The Shans are absorbing the Tai Loi (Wa), Yang Set, Muhso, and others. The Burmese, on the other hand, are absorbing both Shans and Kachins, as well as Karens, Chins, and so on. Gradually the Burmese language is spreading all over the country. But, in their turn, the Burmese themselves are undoubtedly giving ground to the Chinese, who possess, in an extraordinary degree, this capacity for absorption. Nor is the population of Burma at all unresponsive to such Chinese influence. For the Tibeto-Burmans themselves (*i.e.*, Burmese, Kachins, Chins, and Lolo) appear to have irrupted in great waves of emigration out of an ancient home in Tibet: while the Siamese-Chinese (*i.e.*, Shans and Karens) are believed

originally to have lived in China in the valleys of the Yang-tze* and Hoang Ho† rivers. Besides this, the Chinese strengthen their influence by certain customs, of which details may be found on page 21 of my “Burmese Enchantment.”

In the face of this rapid transformation of nationality, it is almost impossible to tabulate the people into distinct tribes for easy mental reference. Dress, speech, customs, geographical distribution, and even language are not sure guides to nationality: and it is now recognised that such distinctions, which are exceedingly complex, have led to over classification.

* * * * *

The Burmese have a quarter of their own in Keng Tung: but they are (with a few notable exceptions) a degenerate lot. One or two Indian firms have established small branch shops, which enable us to cash cheques on Rangoon. In other respects the Indian element is not at all a desirable one. Its frivolous litigation must be an insufferable nuisance to the Civil Authorities. To-day (for example) one Indian has cut a branch from another Indian's tree, to give it to a goat. The tree is a miserable thing, of no value at all. If the complainant wins his suit he may possibly get 8 annas. But the defendant will inevitably appeal. Yet, rather than abandon the joy of litigation, these two are walking 34 miles (there and back) to the court in Loimwe, where

* See Map Square F. Q. † *Hwong*, Yellow: *Ho*, River.

they propose to waste the Civil Officer's precious time with 'footle' like this. If litigation is a pastime, I cannot see why it should not be made expensive, like all other recreations.

Not that the law is always as judicial as one might desire. There was once a magistrate who wrote out his finding—'*Acquitted.*' His servant (who had undertaken for a consideration to ascertain the result) peeped at the judgment as it lay on the table. Unfortunately the good news was celebrated too freely. The magistrate, hearing the rejoicings, knew that his finding had been read. He was so annoyed that he struck out the word '*Acquitted,*' and wrote '*Guilty*'—instead. Which only shows what a tricky thing law is!

* * * * *

Indians show a tendency to ride rough-shod over their neighbours in Burma. Their readiness for litigation gives them an advantage over people who have no particular love for it. One Indian runs in another for destroying his wretched little shrub. But he does not hesitate to lop a sacred *peepal* tree which shades the shrine of a Shan *Nat*. He would be mobbed for that in India. Here, he even declines to pay compensation. The *Nat* is angry. I shall watch the case with care. I don't fancy the *Nat* will go to court. But he will let it be known that every misfortune that occurs everywhere in the town is the result of his wrath. The offender might easily develop the 'evil eye,' and *that* would

inevitably mean ruin. I need hardly add that the Shans, like the Burmese, hold Indian *Kalas* in supreme contempt.

The European community of Keng Tung consists of two Italian Catholic Fathers, and now, latterly, of some Italian Sisters, two of whom work in the hospital. The devotion of these good ladies to the cause of Charity is beyond praise—and in so remote a place, of course, their work receives little recognition. But I believe that gratitude for their benevolence will live long in many a distant mountain home. In the opposite camp is an American Baptist Mission, with interests amongst the Wa and Lahu tribes here and in China. Lastly, an ex-contractor, whom the Shans call *Nar-ley-bo*, 'the Deaf Chief,' has resided here many years and won considerable respect from the people. That constitutes the entire permanent European element of Keng Tung. It is mostly foreign and godly, but either the Assistant Superintendent, or the Commandant of Loimwe, is present for several days in each month to restore the balance for the British and for wickedness.

* * * * *

Once a year, in January, the Sawbwa goes out to bathe in some hot sulphur springs, which lie in a bog a couple of miles to the south of the town. It is said that an ancestor of his recovered from leprosy with the help of these waters. As they rise in a dangerous marsh, they are only approachable when a pier is built out for

the Sawbwa's use. There are, however, much more attractive sulphur springs, rising in safe, hard ground three miles to the west of Keng Tung, at the foot of the encircling wall of hills. The waters are said to be good for skin diseases, and are used a good deal by Chinamen. I have bathed in them myself. The water is not drunk. It comes steaming and bubbling up with a temperature of 198° (Fahr.). Cold water is let in from an adjacent stream, to make a bath bearable.

The Sawbwa's return from the springs is made the occasion of a State Entry. Villagers come in and line the roads, each carrying a rifle, or a *dhar*. A select body, called the Keng Tung Police, is much to the fore in blue and green uniforms. These police have lately taken unto themselves a Siamese instructor, who has effected the most amazing improvements. The force marches about at the 'present,' which, I am sure, is not half as easy as it looks. It is led by Sergeant Ai Noi, who has put off his Shan clothes, and decked himself in green trousers and a helmet. They say German officers never smile again after assuming the awful responsibilities of their commissions. Some like misfortune has befallen Ai Noi. He draws his sword and salutes, with a look of overwhelming care on his face.

The Sawbwa is preceded in the procession by his *Hpayas*, or Ministers. They each ride under an umbrella. These *Hpayas* form an assembly, or council, called the *Sanum*, and have a good deal of power. Last of all





A *Winjaba*, OR MAZE OF HURDLES, IS SET UP BEFORE THE
SAWBWA'S PALACE, KENG TUNG.



GATE OF THE SAWBWA'S *Haw*, OR PALACE, KENG TUNG.

comes the Sawbwa himself on an elephant, so surrounded with umbrellas, that the general effect is of a big balloon.

The Sawbwa's palace, or *Haw*, is a great rambling building of Indian design. It is clumsily built, and is unlikely long to survive the little earthquake shocks which frequently occur. Earthquakes are believed to presage war. For this reason it was once seriously suggested that I should bring down a detachment from Loimwe and have a sham-fight, so as to get these unlucky omens fulfilled and done with.

I always feel like an ant on the vast expanse of floor of the audience hall. It is a day's march across it to the closet where the Sawbwa usually receives us, and entertains us with his own unforgettable cigarettes. The glittering glass throne faces south like the rest of the building. This is unusual, as the south is an unlucky direction. Thibaw's throne and palace in Mandalay face east, in a lucky direction. This also showed respect to the former suzerain—the Chinese Emperor. Since the Keng Tung Sawbwa's present palace was built after British annexation, there may be very good reasons for not facing it towards Peking. But why is it not faced west towards Delhi and London, or incidentally towards a pretty lake? In any case, why does it face in such an unlucky direction as the south? In this same connection I might mention that the programme for the Viceroy's visit to Mandalay in 1916, arranged for his

moving by the West Gate of the Fort. This had to be altered at the cost of a good deal of inconvenience, because the Burmese council objected that Burmese Kings always used the East Gate, reserving the West Gate only for funerals.

When the Sawbwa left Keng Tung for this same Mandalay Durbar, he made a false start, in order to deceive the Palace *Nats*, or Spirits. The hour of 2 P.M., being found propitious, he strolled forth casually, and spent a long afternoon and an uncomfortable night in the *Dak Bungalow* at Sawm-Sak, within a mile of his own palace. The real start was made from the *Dak Bungalow* next morning. The Palace *Nat* was thus kept in ignorance of the departure. This is not, I believe, a Burmese custom, though Burmese Kings objected to leaving their palaces, owing to the fact that if any one took possession of the throne he was considered there and then to be the rightful King. One famous Burmese King, Alaungsithu, was carried out of his palace in his sleep. He was smothered as soon as he woke—but by then his throne was lost, and he was no longer King of Burma. Thibaw, it is said, never left his palace at all even for a walk, lest some one should seize it in his absence.

I have also heard that on one occasion this Sawbwa's nephew, the Chieng Hkam Myoza*, and his mother, the famous Princess Tip Hti La, were met in a monastery

* Map Square C. U. A *Myoza* is a small Raja.

where they too were illuding the *Nats*. Incidentally they had one of their little disagreements there.

Princess Tip Hti La is a half-sister of the Keng Tung Sawbwa. She is a lady of great character. She is now a prominent member of society in Burma, where she is celebrated for her manners and her jewels. She has traded largely in timber and other things. During her son's minority she administered the State of Chieng Hkam. She thinks she ruled it decidedly better than he does—and, indeed, that was the subject of their 'fisticuffs' on this occasion. She lives no longer in the scene of her old triumphs, but resides now in Taunggyi. Her son, the Myoza, is an exceptionally nice lad. He stopped with me once for a few days in Loimwe.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SHANS.

SOME people make a point of never saying 'I don't know'. The Shan, on the contrary, has no such scruples. He is asked "What is your origin?" and replies "*Am hu*—I don't know".

"What is the meaning of your name *Shan*, or *Tai*?"

"*Am hu*—I don't know."

"Well, who are you, and where did you originally come from?"

"*Am hu*".

Now all this is not really very surprising, if you *will* ask such awkward questions. The Shans are a numerous people. They have also been a great people. But they have lived under many different names and governments. It would be impossible to record the story of their wars, conquests and defeats as a whole, even if that story was known. Unfortunately, it is not known. It is all obliterated by the mists of Time, and attempts to look back into that gloom seem most discouraging. Cochrane's monograph on 'The Shans' professes to fit together some sort of narrative. But, as a fact, it does nothing of the sort. It can only be regarded as one long headache.

Little advance seems to have been made upon the information collected in the Census Report of 1911.* It is stated there that any logical division of the Shans, or Tai, into constituent parts is almost impossible. They are the most numerous and the most widely spread of all the races in the Indo-Chinese peninsula. The migration of Tai races into Burma probably proceeded from somewhere in South-Western China. Major Davies believes that they came from the Yang-tze basin. Their irruption was of a military nature. In this respect it differs from the migration of the Burmese who were forced out of their early Tibetan home by stress of circumstances, which obliged them to seek a new home in Burma. The first Shan invasion of Burma is said to have occurred in about 700 B.C. In the fifth and sixth centuries A.D., the Shans obtained a permanent footing in the Shweli Valley near Bhamo, and from there they spread in all directions into the countries where they are found now. The northward stream passed through the Upper Irrawaddi towards the Shan settlements now existing in Hkamti. North-West, they moved to Assam; westward to the Chindwin; and south-east into the present Shan States, and on into Siam. Subsequently their expulsion from their original home in China was completed with the conquest by Kublai Khan of the old Shan Kingdom of Nan-chao, or Tali Fu, in 1257 A.D. Their political power in Burma was finally broken by

* Census Report, 1911, Volume IX, pages 204 to 273.

Alaungpaya in 1757 A.D. The Shan States (nominally at any rate) became Burmese territory, and so passed to us with the rest of Thibaw's Empire.

The generic term *Tai*, which is specially applied to certain tribes, appears also to embrace all the other branches of the Shan race as well. Used with reference to Siam, the same word is merely aspirated into *Th'ai*. Similarly the whole of these Tai people are known to the Burmese as *Shan*, of which the word *Siam* is merely a variation. Major Davies is clearly of opinion that the "Siamese themselves are only a southern off-shoot of the Shans." The Census Report of 1911 (page 274) seems to accept this view.

Taw Sein Ko commenting on the word *Tai* says that *Tai* is derived from the Cantonese dialect of the Chinese language. *Tai* in Cantonese is the equivalent of *Ta* in Yünnanese, and means 'great.' In a Chinese history of the old Shan States of Nan-chao (the modern Tali Fu) he found that in the 7th and 11th centuries there were six Shan kingdoms whose names all began with *Ta* or *Tai*.

The Chinese, as I have mentioned, now call the Shans *Bai-ye*, or 'Plain Barbarians'. The Kachins call them *Sam*. The Burmese of course call them *Shan*: and incidentally the name of the well-known railway-junction of *Shan-zu*, near Mandalay, is derived from the Burmese words *Shan* and *Zu*, meaning 'Shans collect.'



A STREET IN KENG TUNG.

Since the Shans appear to have come like a flood out of China, and to have over-run parts of Burma, it is interesting to note that there is a Burmese word '*shan*,' which means 'to be full to overflowing.' I am, however, unable to find out whether the correct spelling of this word is with a deep-toned *Ma-that*, or with a normal toned *Na-that*. The Burmese themselves appear to connect the name of the Shans with *Kan-baw-za*, the Burmese name for Cambodia.

Situated as they are between the two powerful States of China and Burma, both of which latterly claimed sovereign rights, the Shans for many generations 'hedged'—paying tribute to both powers as seemed advisable. Some of the Shan States, including Keng Tung, were still doing this at the time of British annexation.

The British Shan States are divided for purposes of administration into Northern and Southern. The Northern Shan States are Taung Baing, North and South Hsenwi, Hsipaw, and Maing Lun. The Southern Shan States include (amongst several other small ones) Keng Tung, Murng Mai, Yawng Hwe, Murng Pawn, Chieng Hkam, and Mawk Mai.

Keng Tung is the largest, though not the richest, of the Southern Shan States. Here, the Shans belong to three great clans. Of these the *Tai*, or Western Shans, occupy the western part of the State near the Salween River. The *Hkeun*, or *Hkun*, inhabit the main Keng

Tung valley. Their distribution is more compact than that of the others. Their own theory is that after long journeys they somehow reached Bangkok by sea, and were settled in Keng Tung afterwards. The Sawbwa himself is the head of all the Hkeun. Lastly, the *Leur*, or *Lu*, live in the eastern valleys towards the Mekong. The *Leur* and *Hkeun* are really two branches of the same tribe.* Their languages are closely allied, and both have the same characters as, and points of divergence from, the Lao dialect of Chieng-mai (in Siam).†

Besides the *Tai*, *Leur*, and *Hkeun* mentioned above, there are also three other kinds of Shans found in smaller numbers in the Keng Tung State. Of these the *Lem* live in the north, spreading across into China in the vicinity of Meng Lem. The *Lao* live in the south of the State.‡ The *Yoon* occupy a few villages on our side of the Siamese border, but mostly live beyond it in Siam. They have a marked Siamese appearance. Officially, and for political reasons, the Siamese insist that the *Yoon* are true Siamese. The *Yoon*, however, seem to regard themselves as Shans, and to be regarded as such by other Shans.

The Shans are a highly civilized race. Socially, they are cheery and pleasant. They are quiet and friendly,

* Census Report, 1911, Volume IX, page 274.

† Census Report, 1911, Volume IX, page 206.

‡ Upper Burma Gazetteer, page 416.

and possess a keen sense of humour. I have shown that twenty thousand of them can crowd together without needing a single policeman. They have, however, plenty of vices, tempered with much piety. Many of them take opium, and it is almost safe to say that *all* of them are reckless gamblers. In fact, gambling is the only business they really exert themselves about. In other matters they are stupendously lazy and casual. Their tastes are simple. They only need enough to eat, plenty to smoke, pretty silks to wear, and a steady round of festivals and entertainments. Their land is a sleepy, happy one. The busy, restless world outside is very far off—miles and miles away along a cart-road. The Shans are a wrecked nation, cast up on the rocks of Time, having no more to do with the ‘ships that pass in the night.’ Once they were *Tai*, or ‘great.’ Now they succumb easily to the influence of robust neighbours like the Chinese and Burmese.

In the ‘Pacification of Burma,’ Sir Charles Crosthwaite describes how the Shan States came under British influence. They formed (nominally at any rate) part of Thibaw’s kingdom, and were annexed along with the rest of Upper Burma at Thibaw’s fall in 1885. But we were kept too busy in Burma to attend to the Shans until 1887. By that time, the misery in which Thibaw had left them, had developed into hopeless chaos—the result of quarrels, lawlessness, fratricidal wars, Siamese aggression, and the establishment and dissolution of Confederacies. Many of the inhabitants had fled. Most

of the towns and villages were burnt and in ruins. Even the roads and fields were overgrown with rank grass.

The affairs of all the Shan States west of the Salween River were settled by Mr. Hilderbrand in 1887 and 1888. He was accompanied by military columns, but the pacification is a long story of patient, peaceful, and successful conciliation, and of the adjustment of endless claims and quarrels.

The Trans-Salween States were not brought into line until 1889-1890. With the unexpected collapse of Thibaw, the British Government had found itself master of Upper Burma almost before it had had time to think at all. But now, after some hesitation, it was decided not to stop short at the Salween, but boldly to assume charge of all the territories which had formerly belonged to the Burmese Government.

The two most important Trans-Salween States were Keng Tung and Chieng Hung.* Both had possessions even across the Mekong. Indeed, Chieng Hung lay astride the Mekong, with six districts, or *pannas*, on each side.† A Burmese Resident lived at the capital town

* Map Square E.T.

† Describing the Government of Chieng Hung, Garnier says "Cette haute assemblée se compose de quatre grands mandarins et de huit autres d'un rang inférieur, représentant chacun l'une des douze provinces "chip song Panna" qui forment le royaume de Xieng Hong (Chieng Hung) . . . Le mot *panna*, par lequel on désigne ces provinces, signifie millier, et se rapporte au nombre des inscrits. On distingue les *muongs* (I spell it *Murng* throughout) qui sont *panna* de ceux qui ne le sont pas." *Voyage d'exploration en Indo-Chine*, page 407.

of Chieng Hung,* but the State was much more under Chinese influence than Burmese. So the entire territories of Chieng Hung, known to us now as the *Sip-song Panna* (or 'Twelve Provinces'), were handed over to China. A condition was imposed, namely, that China should not part with any of it—for we desired to create buffer-states between our possessions and those of the French. "With almost indecent haste" (to quote Sir Charles Crosthwaite's words) China transferred a portion of *Sip-song Panna* to the French. As a protest, we withdrew the customary tribute of 'gold-flowers' paid by Keng Tung—for these remote Trans-Salween States, though acknowledging Burmese suzerainty from time to time, had also paid nominal tribute to China.

The present Sawbwa of Chieng Hung married the eldest sister of our Keng Tung Sawbwa. He is a man of about fifty, and is the head of the *Leur* Shans, just as our Sawbwa is head of the *Hkeuns*. His extraordinary stinginess is the subject of endless amusing tales. It is said that he insists on living free of expense. Certain villages are made to supply his food, and certain others the native oil which feeds the only lamp in his palace. No kerosene is allowed. Any one lighting his cheroot at the only lamp, pays a fee of 12 annas : and if the lamp goes out, its attendant is fined 12 annas. The Sawbwa buries his money in various secret places. Asked by his sons for an allowance with which to 'travel' in

* Map Square E.U.

Burma, he is said to have only given them Rs. 100 each. On one occasion he offered 8 annas to a troupe of strolling players who demanded Rs. 2 for their performance. So the Royal Family had to go round to the house of a more generous subject, where the dogs and monkeys danced for them. The Sawbwa has only eight pairs of trousers, and even these have to be *given* him. He sells the old pairs.

* * * * *

As most of Keng Tung lay on the west of the Mekong, it was decided at annexation to keep it. In 1889 a Boundary Commission examined the frontiers of small Trans-Salween States to the south, which belonged to the State of Murng Pan, but which the Siamese had occupied during the period of chaos.* The Siamese Boundary Commissioners never put in an appearance at all, so that the question was not finally settled in our favour until 1892. In that same year the Trans-Mekong State of Chieng Kong (with its capital at Murng Hsing),† which really belonged to Keng Tung, was cut adrift and ceded to Siam. Before the Siamese could assume charge of Chieng Kong, they were forced to sign the treaty of Chantabun with the French, by which all territory East of the Mekong passed to France. In this way the Mekong became the boundary between British

* These small states were Murng Tang, Murng Hang, Murng Hta and Murng Kyawat.

† Map Square F. U.

India and French Indo-China—an arrangement we had all along striven to avoid.

The Boundary Commission of 1889 detached Mr. Scott (now Sir George Scott) to go and receive the allegiance of Keng Tung. His Mission reached Keng Tung on the 14th of March, 1890. Two days later—after a formal interchange of visits—some Panthay muleteers belonging to the Mission were set upon in the town. One muleteer was never heard of again. Another was shot by the Sawbwa with his own hand. The Sawbwa, Sau Hkam Hpu, was a boy of 16, and brother of the present Sawbwa. As a result of this outrage the British Lion's tail stood straight on end. The Sawbwa was terrified at the wrath he had called down upon himself. He paid a fine of Rs. 2,000 on the spot, and the friendly relations thus established have known no interruption since. This dissolute youth fortunately died of his excesses at the age of 22, after reigning eleven years.

The Sawbwas and other Chiefs of the Shan States continue to manage their own affairs. Within reason they are interfered with as little as possible. The Keng Tung Sawbwa has his own courts, and is able to pass even the death sentence when necessary. As Sir Charles Crosthwaite points out, "there is no other example of an integral part of British India, sixty thousand square miles in extent, being administered entirely by quasi-independent chiefs only lightly controlled and guided by British Officers." The Government of these Sawbwas, if I may judge by what I saw in

Keng Tung, is benevolent and paternal. Prosperity and happiness are restored. Looking at the country now, with bountiful paddy crops safely reaped, with villages full of children, and well stocked with cattle, with roads safe, and trade flourishing, it is hardly possible to believe, as news comes to-day of Thibaw's death,* that within his life-time these Shan States passed through fire and tribulation.

* 15th December, 1916.



THE SAWBWA'S SHRINE, KENG TUNG.
(Ho Koang Pagoda.)



HO KOANG *Kyaung*, KENG TUNG.

CHAPTER V.

KENG TUNG—ITS SHRINES.

THE festival season, which I have described, begins in October with bright winter sunshine. It lasts all through the dusty summer months, which season in this country immediately follows winter. Now, that period is over too, and the rains have come round again. The Buddhist Lent opens with a serene night in July, when the wet foliage sparkles in the light of a full-moon. It is the time when the *Padaing-Ngo* trees bring forth clusters of translucent, pink blossoms. As the Burmese name implies, these flowers have made the 'Goldsmith weep,' because he cannot copy them. And, in truth, their highly crinkled petals, each poised upon a hair, are inimitable.

Lent lasts four months, and terminates, as I have described, with illuminations at the full-moon of the *Tha-din-jut*. Lent is a quiet, stay-at-home time, a subdued season which always seems to me to harmonize well with the sombre roofs of Keng Tung. It rains a good deal. The holy days are spent in the *Kyaungs*, or monasteries.

A Shan pagoda, or monastery, differs from a Burmese one. Neither the words 'pagoda' nor 'monastery' are

really very suitable, but there seems to be no other convenient term. These shrines have been developed to suit a wet climate, where everything must be kept under shelter. They are great oblong halls, with low stone walls round them. Pictures illustrating familiar Buddhist stories are painted on these walls. The floors are cemented, and old folk let off some of their superfluous piety by incessantly brushing them. Down either side of the hall stand teak pillars supporting the spreading tiled roof. The roof lathes rest on beams which are built up very ingeniously into a framework of squares. At one end of the hall stands an altar, such as I have already described. A great number of Buddha images sit and stand upon it. There are sometimes as many as twenty or thirty, of which the central one is usually a colossal seated figure. From time to time the number is added to—but I only know of one instance in which an image was removed and destroyed. That was in August, 1916, when plague was believed to have appeared in Keng Tung. On that occasion this particular image was supposed to have been seen in dreams by each victim of the disease. Evil charms were thought to have been cast on it, so it was destroyed, and the bricks of which it was built were thrown into the Nam Lap River. As a rule, however, these beautiful golden Buddhas sit calmly on their altar for generations. Sometimes they even out-live the shrine itself. Then saplings and creepers grow up round them. But still they sit undisturbed in the open, gazing out over the ruin, until at last the jungle overwhelms them.



THE CHING YEUN PAGODA, KENG TUNG.



THE WAT IN PAGODA, KENG TUNG.

(Glittering tinsel streamers sway with every breath of air.)

There is just such a ruin on some hills outside Keng Tung.

In most pagodas, and also in the Sawbwa's *Haw*, or palace, there are immense drums, which are beaten on important occasions. The beating begins with slow regular thuds, which gradually quicken. *Gompa* drums are beaten with exactly the same rhythm in Tibet.

From the roof of the hall numbers of streamers hang down. In dry Buddhist countries (like Tibet or Upper Burma) these streamers would float from tall poles outside—as indeed, a few do here also. But most of them hang inside from the roof beams, their glittering thread or tinsel designs waving in any chance breath of air. Small bits of coloured glass are let into the roof, and from them patches of red, blue, or yellow light fall upon the golden images, or upon the clean-swept floor. Once I saw a sunset pour in upon the pavement through the coloured windows of Milan Cathedral. These tiny patches of colour in Keng Tung pagodas, recall faintly memories of that glorious flood of light in Milan.

Lying alongside of this hall there is always another, in which the *Phoongyis*, or monks, live. Its interior is partitioned off into cubicles where the monks sleep. Every village has such a shrine, where travellers may rest and sleep before the calm Buddhas. Sometimes those village pagodas are very magnificent. I have noticed that the founders of many are Chinamen. Sometimes they are poor thatched sheds, with only a

few small images on a bamboo altar. But grand or simple, they represent the best the people can afford.

Keng Tung fills you with a yearning to sketch wherever you turn from the road by some picturesque gate into the quiet enclosure of a pagoda. Inside the enclosure are small detached halls, refectories, and libraries, in which the palm-leaf books are kept. The walls of these out-buildings are decorated in coloured glass with specially handsome designs of *Nats*, and other mythical beings. And beyond them is the great, sombre *Kyaung* or monastery : sombre by reason of its old old timber, its brown, weathered tiles, and its great sweeping roofs. The eaves and ridges of each overlapping roof are decorated with terra-cotta figures of birds, *Nats*, elephants and dragons. The manufacture of these terra-cotta figures is an industry of Keng Tung.

Two or three stairways lead up into the building between curving brick balustrades, which are shaped to represent the fabulous serpent-dragon *Makara*. Small overlapping roofs rise one above the other over these stairways also. So you enter one or other of the many shrines.

Now, on a fast day, or Sabbath, in Lent, the scene is an attractive one. The floor before the altar is covered with gifts of fruit and flowers, and little imitation trees made of plantain leaves. One of the Sawbwa's Ministers is presenting a copy of the *Wethandaya zyat*, written on



WAT HPA KYAU, KENG TUNG.



WAT NOI NAWNG, KENG TUNG.
(Porches and gates beside the road.)

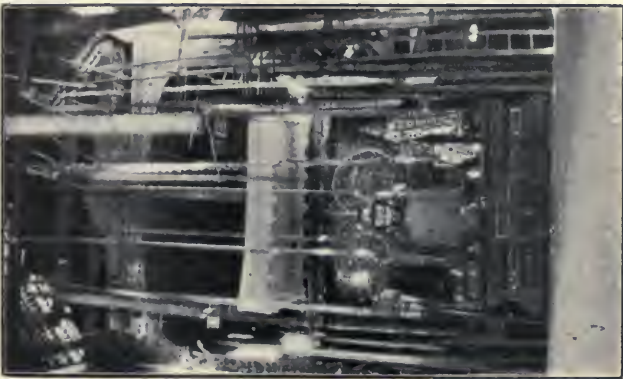
palm leaf. The book, which is a valued gift, is placed inside a small paper pagoda.

All round the four walls, mats and pillows are laid out, with their owners sitting about on them smoking, counting beads, chatting pleasantly to neighbours, or succumbing to the sleepy, restful influence of the great building. The people came early in the morning of this, the moon's quarter-day ; and as they passed in through the outer court, they leaned little sticks or bamboos against the pagodas there, and against the old peepal tree, thus giving expression to a pious wish that the sacred objects so supported may never fall, but stand for ever and ever. Such acts arise usually from mere habit. But sometimes, when things have not gone well, this rite is suggested by astrologers as propitious, and then it has special significance as a meritorious deed. So the people enter, each into the pagoda which belongs specially to their own quarter of the town, to spend the day quietly in meditation. They will sleep to-night before the serene Buddhas and glittering, candle-lit altars, and they will depart to-morrow with minds calmed for the week's labour.

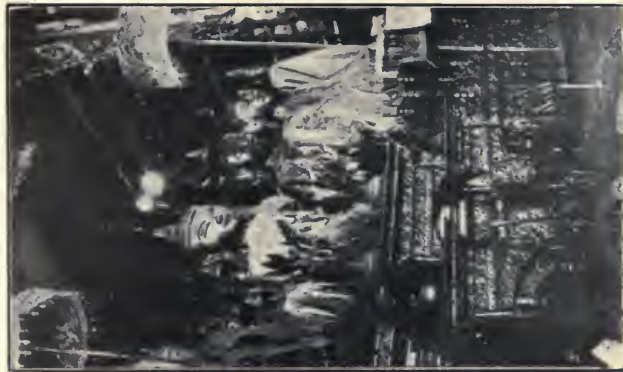
There is no repressive sternness in these religious observances. On the contrary, there is more tea-drinking and chatting than usual. It is a season, too, when children come in and play with the small novices, who forget all too soon the decorum which it is proper for them to observe. In a quiet corner outside, a game of

football is in progress. The yellow robes of novices are tucked up, and their bare legs displayed, in most unpriestly abandon. Or else the boys are skylarking round the altars, and down corridors, tripping over indulgent folk who sit about smoking cheroots. This is no torture day for the young. Their simple, happy play does not detract a bit from the dignity of the pagoda. These same children in years to come will look back regretfully to their childhood, and will love the quiet picnic days of Lent. They will not abominate them, as some of us have been taught to abominate Sunday. I believe that many of us find the chime of Church bells the most mournful and depressing of all earthly sounds. It recalls, throughout the whole of our lives, memories of Bible-class, Etons, top-hats, collects, crocodiles, and a second dose of a dull sermon on long twilight summer evenings, when our whole small beings yearned for freedom in the woods.

Here, in Keng Tung, as darkness falls, candles are lit before the images, till their golden faces shine out of the gloom. The altars glitter with little points of light. Fret and worry have no place here. The worship and repose of generations pervades these shrines, enfolding tired nature in its calm embrace. Outside in the world, right and wrong are at war, and wrong usually gets the best of it. Mothers and wives, and the blood of women and children, cry aloud to Heaven to-day for vengeance—and cry in vain. If the Gods hear—at least they are slow to answer; and in the meanwhile we perish. But in truth, the Gods are powerless. The



THE YAN-KONE PAGODA, KENG TUNG.



THE ALTAR, CHIN NGAM PAGODA,
KENG TUNG.

When gongs are sweetly echoing :
The soft enchantment here within
Goes forth from hence and gives mankind
Serenity and peace of mind.

catastrophe of the present war has its origin in hate and craving. They *must* bear their fruit, according to the Law. So also, the hate of to-day will likewise come to harvest later on! Thus the Buddha taught. So the wheel turns inexorably. Civilizations fall to bits. Only broken pottery remains, and dim memories of dead dynasties. Consider the infinite eternity which will blot us out. Learn the lesson of the hills which are not easily moved, of rivers which lose themselves in the sea, of wind which sighs in the pines, and is gone. Escape lies in simplicity of heart. Now we are only cogs in a complex machine, slaves of its output, and victims of our own inventions. Revolting against materialism, we may well seek refuge in the philosophy of Buddha. It goes to the very root of things, and gives peace of mind.

* * * * *

Two distinct influences are visible in the Buddhism of the Shans. One is the influence of *Mahayana*, the northern Buddhism of Tibet and China, called the Greater Vehicle. The other is *Himayana*, the southern Buddhism of Ceylon and Burma, called the Lesser Vehicle.* It is a controversial point which of the two was originally predominant. The controversy, which there seems no means of settling either way, has a small literature of its own, which leaves little unsaid. Here, our concern is not with which came first, but with the traces which still remain of *Mahayana*. For *Himayana*,

* See my ' *Realm of the Gods*, ' page 194.

the Buddhism of Burma, has now prevailed : and its influence is always growing as the Burmese language spreads. But traces of *Mahayana* are still found in remote parts, and especially near the Chinese border, where also the impression of Chinese influence upon architecture is most noticeable. On one of my tours I was much struck with the discovery in a village, of rites which really might have been dug up straight from Tibet and planted here. The village was Wan Nam Yu near Murg Ma,* which is only four days' journey distant to the north of Keng Tung. I reached it after a long march of 21 miles from Murg Yang across ridges which rise to 5,800 feet and are covered with small oaks, rhododendrons, and pine trees. We reached Wan Nam Yu late in the afternoon, and put up in one of the pagodas. It is a fine old building—so old, that no one remembers its history. The villagers are Tai Loi—a simple, unattractive, dirty folk, covered with lumps and goitres, after the fashion of many hill-people. The Tai Loi, as I have mentioned, are believed to be Wa who have adopted Buddhism. They are stolid and superstitious, but remarkable for their fervent, simple piety which was quite touching to watch from my quiet corner of the shrine. After devotions, they pour out water from a jug, as a sign that they share their merit with all the worlds of *Nats* and men. This is only a variation of the Burmese rite of sprinkling

* Map Square D.U.

drops of water after a dedication.* The monks here meditate in the four directions, working themselves up into a sort of ecstasy. The old ' abbot,' who had reached his second childhood, continued to revolve forgetfully till he became quite giddy.

As is the custom in all these village monasteries, the monks and novices came in at dusk and chanted before the Buddha—the old voices and the young blending harmoniously in the rhythm of the chant. Afterwards the novices went away to their own place, leaving the old ' abbot ' all alone before the altar, wrapped in a sort of trance. He was a pathetic, palsied old figure, meditating there all alone on Impermanence, appealing to the four quarters, and passing with the ease of extreme old age from devotion to sleep, and back again to devotion.

The idea of earning merit by mechanical means, so familiar in Tibet, is strongly noticeable here.† In a separate, darkened shed the monks pace up and down for merit counting their beads. The platform along which they walk is a foot high, about eighteen inches broad, and forty feet long.

Outside the pagoda there is a circumambulatory walk, round a sacred peepal tree. I really could hardly believe my eyes when I saw men and children fervently pacing round it with the right arm inwards, and *shiko-*ing to an image after each round, to mark the credit of

* See my '*A Burmese Enchantment*,' Chapter II.

† See my '*Realm of the Gods*,' page 103.

one more point of merit.* This, you may see in any village in Tibet or Ladakh. It is emphatically not *Himayana*, and I believe you will find nothing like it in the rest of Burma.

Nearby, there is another old pagoda, called the *Kyaung Pa*, or 'Forest Monastery'—a quaint old pile of sweeping roofs. It stands near a lotus pond which is crossed by a small bridge. There is a colossal seated Buddha in this shrine, with again a promenade round it, along which people pace to earn merit. These things are very curious and rare. They are traces, no doubt, of *Mahayana* influence which was once strong. And now I come to think of it, the procession which moves round the *Wingaba* in Keng Tung at the *Tha-din-jut*, keeps its right hand meritoriously inwards towards the shrine in the centre of the maze, and encircles it thrice.

In Keng Tung itself, the most noticeable points of *Mahayana* influence are the symbols placed on poles, and kept in racks beside the altars. As I have already remarked, they include all the six common symbols of Tibet.† For the rest, Burmese Buddhism prevails in Keng Tung in a corrupt form.

In essential points, all the Keng Tung pagodas are very much alike. They vary only in detail. Therefore it would be tedious to recount the splendours of the *Mawik Mai* and *Maing Byin* monasteries near the post

* See my '*Realm of the Gods*,' pages 31 and 167.

† See my '*Realm of the Gods*,' page 158.



THE ROAD PASSES BENEATH THE QUAINT BALCONIES AND STEPS OF THE CHING YEUN PAGODA,
KENG TUNG.

office, or to describe minutely the Sawbwa's own *Ho Koang* pagoda. There is another beautiful shrine called the *Hpa Kyau* in a corner of the palace grounds. Its glass mosaic is good. Still further on, the road passes beneath the quaint balconies and steps of the *Ching Yeun* and *Noi Nawng*. Nor can I even mention by name any of the more secluded shrines, except the *Tsawm Tawng*, whose crumbling pagoda spire dominates all Keng Tung : and the *Wat In* whose splendour outshines the splendour of them all. There are no restrictions. You may go freely wherever you wish, enjoying at leisure the beauty and repose of these magnificent old buildings. The palm trees, the quiet grandeur of overlapping roofs, the subdued richness of interiors, the glint and gleam of golden doors and pillars, the glitter of glass gates, all combine to make these monasteries almost faultlessly beautiful. Outside the town, the *Tat Sawm Siri* stands on a hill, commanding a fine view over Keng Tung. The *Yan-Kone* lies hidden in a teak copse ; and the *Wat Pa-Leng*, which is the great Chinese pagoda, is more extravagantly decorated than any of them.

This holy-day, the Sawbwa too has been to his *Ho Koang* shrine. Now, as he leaves, a small procession passes out of the pagoda. The Sawbwa enters his royal rickshaw. The Umbrella of State is hoisted over him, and the Royal Cigar-box follows behind. A line of swordsmen kneel in the road till all is ready. Then they move off to the palace.

Inside the pagoda, the Sawbwa's pretty women still linger, placing a few candles on the altar. Jewels gleam in their dark hair, of which a knot can be seen above their turbans. They wear the usual fashionable skirt of Keng Tung. It is striped round with bands of black, yellow, and red, with a broad green or mauve velvet border at the bottom. The Sawbwa's Queen, and his Mother, Sau Nang Hso Wanna (called the '*Mey Daw*') come across and say a few words. The *Mey Daw* is a very determined old lady. She is the power behind the throne. At present the solemnity of her surroundings lends extra dignity and charm to her manner. But she *has* been known, when the Military Police bagpipes lured her, to dance a sword dance with the Commandant of Loimwe!! Now she passes out to the palace, and the monastery is left silent and dim. Only one little figure remains, and slips his hand into mine. It is the Sawbwa's little son. He cannot go home to the *Haw* he explains, proudly indicating his yellow robe. He is now entered as a novice. But he will be released again in time for the next 'Water Festival' at *Tagoo*, to work his villainous squirt.

KENG TUNG.

Upon the holy days in Lent
Within these dim and solemn halls,
Where generations thus have spent
Their Sabbath days within these walls:
Where slender lines of pillars lose
Themselves high up in dusky roofs
Beneath the sombre sweep of tile:
Linger. And gaze on Budh a-while.

When glass mosaics glint and gleam :
And on the altars candles seem
To cast a mellow, golden glow
On men and women as they go
To sprinkle gifts with water when
They share that deed with *Nats* and men :
When gongs are sweetly echoing :
The soft enchantment here within
Goes forth from hence and gives mankind
Serenity, and peace of mind.

CHAPTER VI.

WINTER ON THE PLAIN.

WINTER comes in on the Keng Tung plain in November with early-morning mist. Fog lies heavy over the country until ten o'clock. Then it evaporates, leaving the rest of the day gorgeously fine. The sunshine is cool and invigorating. It is a joy to sit and bask in it. New streamers, that were put up at the *Tha-din-jut* festival, float on the breeze from every pagoda mast. Paddy stands dry and golden in the fields, where already the people have begun to cut and stack it. Blue and red lotus bloom on lakes and ponds. The roads dry up, and traders and mule caravans begin to come in from China, Siam, and Burma. Everything looks fresh and bright after the interminable rains. The return of this pleasant time is marked by the arrival of several new birds. This is the great migration season for birds as well as for men. There is absolutely no saying what surprises the day may bring. I have sometimes noted four or five new species in a morning—birds whose absence I had often deplored hitherto. Many of these travellers are come from China. But though some remain unidentified, I am glad to meet them, and I give them names of my own. The *Bamboo Bird*, for example, is a Woodpecker, who imitates the creaking of a

bamboo. *Getting-clearer-there* is a sort of Tree Pie, who voices those words. *Pukaro* is a green Barbet, who sits on an open branch at the extreme top of a big tree, calling "*Pukaro, Pukaro,*" with extraordinary persistence. The advance guard of this invasion began long ago with the Wagtails. Indeed, as heralds of winter they are really a little too early. The first *Grey Wagtails* arrive in Loimwe on the 16th of August. The *Large Pied Wagtails* usually appear four days later. They come here to stay, and when the full flood of them has arrived by October, they are present on the roads and open turf-land, not merely in scores, but in hundreds of thousands. These exquisite, slender, dainty little birds allow you to approach quite close, before they go off with their joyous, bounding flight. I have seen as many as five or six hundred collect together on a spit of sand by the Nam Lap River, preparatory to roosting in tall grass, but, as a rule, they are only seen in pairs. They seem an expression of all that is simple and joyous. I suppose they die sometimes, though I could not swear to it, never having seen a dead Wagtail. But even allowing that they do, they seem to be free from every other form of trouble, and completely engrossed in running swiftly here and there after insects. They are fearless, artless, and wholly attractive little birds.

The *Eastern Blue Rock-Thrushes*, which migrate here from China, are much more timely heralds of winter. The first usually appear in Keng Tung and Loimwe on the 12th of October. They remain till early in May.

The Eastern Blue Rock-Thrushes are slate-blue all over, with brown speckles on the breast. There are also a few brown feathers in the wing. They have a short sweet song. Though shy at first, these birds are soon emboldened to frequent the house. They nearly always use the brick chimney as a base for operations against caterpillars and spiders, which they see at a great distance with their big, bright eyes. They are not very common birds, and are all the more welcome because they announce the *immediate* return of fine winter weather.

Just about the same time several Warblers appear, including *Franklin's Wren-Warbler*, a charming little brown bird, with grey head and breast, and white belly. The *Magpie Robins* also appear all at once in great numbers. When the Bohenia trees blossom in the garden at Chien-hka in October, they become the resort of scores of *Honey Suckers*, who dip their long, curved beaks into the flowers.

Pintail Snipe come in in small numbers early in September. Once I saw five in a morning, on the 3rd of September. A week before, there had been none; and a week later I saw thirteen. *Fantail* come in in October, and then the snipe shooting—such as it is—is at its best.

On the whole, the winter aspect of the *jheels* round Keng Tung is disappointing. There *are* Duck, but very few. Snipe move on before Christmas, though they

pass through again on their return migration. The interest is therefore mostly of a non-sporting kind. In the evening, *Drongos*, or *King Crows*, hunt the air for flies. *Green Bee-eaters* skim gracefully over the water, showing, with every turn, their lovely green and bronze plumage, their long pointed beaks, and elongated tail-quills. Overhead a large ruddy-brown *Shikra Hawk* poises and sweeps over the marsh. He always hunts the same ground, and I know him well. His fierce yellow eyes and hooked beak are clearly seen through my glasses. With just the same sweeping flight a *Pied Harrier* searches to and fro. His slight body and long, rounded wings give him the appearance of an aeroplane. He is quite white except for a black head, black tips to his wings, and a black V on the back.

Wherever there is marsh land, a little jet-black bird is found, which, when it flies, displays patches of white on wings and tail. The mate is dull-brown instead of black. Though shy, this little bird is very numerous on the Keng Tung plain. For lack of identification, I have called him the *Black-and-White Marsh Pilot*. In just the same sort of marshy ground you find *Munias*, or *Rice Birds*, which feed on paddy. Among them are *Chestnut Bellied Munias*. They have jet-black heads and shoulders, but are otherwise chestnut. Another bird, which I believe to be a variety of the same species, has a black cockade. Its head, back, and breast are entirely black, with chestnut only on tail and wings.

Down in the muddy water live humbler folk. The *Little Ring Plover*, light brown above, and white below, are almost invisible. In the same family party, are *Mongolian Sand Plover*. Out in the shallows, is a *Chestnut Dwarf Bittern*. His brown plumage makes him too almost invisible. The breast is light, but boldly streaked down with dark-brown lines, of which the centre line is nearly black. He hunts for fish and frogs, moving in the marsh with stealthy strides of his long yellow legs, his body crouched low, his neck low and out-stretched. He looks like a snake gliding through the reeds. Suddenly an alarm—buffaloes and villagers!—and he stands erect, just like a soda bottle with a rounded bottom. A *Paddy Bird*, till now unseen, takes fright. He starts from grey nothingness, turns by magic to pure, brilliant white, and flaps slowly across the rice fields. Some *Mynahs* go off with a shrill cry of alarm. A *Sand-piper* wabbles his tail for a moment, and then follows them. The villagers are now quite close. They are driving buffaloes home. With them, a Chinaman is bringing in his mules from grazing. A nervous cry of “Did you do it? Did you do it?” breaks from a *Lapwing* as he rises. Last of all the *Bittern* flies off too. A buffalo tied to a pole nearby is loosed, that he may join the rest of the herd. He has been played at the end of a line all day long, just like a fish. He cannot get entangled. The horizontal pole to which he has been fastened has a heavy stone at one end, and works on a pivot, thus keeping the rope

taught whether the buffalo is near or far. The line comes down to a stick between his horns. The stick tweaks his nose if he strains. The pole, which revolves in a socket on an upright stake, turns with him round and round as he grazes, and the line can twist on a pin, like a fishing-trace. All day long white *Cattle Egrets* have hopped solemnly round him, picking off ticks. They are not now in breeding plumage, so that their celebrated 'Osprey' feathers are not seen. The buffaloes wade for a few minutes into the marsh, groaning luxuriously as the cool waters close over them. Upon the last rides a naked boy, the water rushing over his thighs as the buffalo begins to swim. Urged by him through deep water, the herd emerges on the far bank, and moves off home. Dusk falls, and the light fades from the west, and from the surface of the marsh. A round, yellow moon has already risen over the Loimwe hills. Mosquitoes come piping along. Something nips my wrist. Something else nips my ankle. There is whiskey and soda at home, and it is time to go to it.

The Burmese say that there is a hare in the moon. And indeed, now that it has been pointed out to me, I see a hare very distinctly in the full-moon, nestling against the Gibson-Girl. It was painted there—so the Burmese legend says—by the *Thagya Min* (the King of Heaven), in memory of the Buddha's charity, when he gave away his own body for food during his incarnation as a hare.

The Yünnanese say that there is a man in the moon, and that his sister lives in the sun. This Maid-of-the-sun has a needle which she thrusts into your eyes if you look up and stare at her. The Chinese call the Milky Way *Tien Haw*—the ‘River of Heaven’. They know Orion as *Lee-dee Syin*, or the ‘Ploughman.’ What we regard as his sword, is to them the furrow he ploughs. They have named the Pleiades, *Tsee-dzur Mey*, or the ‘Seven Virgins.’

Venus is called by the Yünnanese *Kaw Tien Syin*—the ‘Crossing Heaven Star.’ Now in November, it is blazing high in the East. New worlds are climbing up that Eastern sky. Orion has risen in all his splendour. Round about him Aldebaran in Taurus, and the glittering Pleiades; Castor and Pollux, the Heavenly Gemini; and (in December) Sirius the blazing Dog Star, appear in turn. High over head shines Altair in Aquila, and near it Vega, and the constellations Cygnus, Pegasus, and Cassiopeia. All that is most splendid in Heaven has risen into the winter sky—stars that have shared camp fires in many a march by plain and hill. Only Scorpio has dipped down into the West, and the Great Bear into the Northern mountains. I think the stately progress of the Universe helps us, by its cold serenity, ourselves to move unruffled through life’s incidents—to grasp our own real heritage in the infinity of Time and Space.

A WINTER NIGHT.

Now in the blazing winter sky
Orion, Mighty Hunter, rose
Out of the East : and climbing high
Gathered around him by degrees
Taurus, Sirius, Pleiades.
Scorpio sought in the West repose.
Wonderful constellations gleam
Beside the star-lit '*Heavenly Stream.*'

CHAPTER VII.

LOIMWE.

THE small outpost of Loimwe lies about 20 miles to the south-east of Keng Tung.

Originally, the Military Police and other Pillars of State lived near Keng Tung itself. But the climate of the plain is not very healthy, and moreover, as a Burman clerk once explained to me, the “temptations of Keng Tung *imadan mya deh*.”* So now we live wholesome, rural lives in Loimwe, at a height of 5,600 feet.

The mule road to Loimwe leaves Keng Tung by the gate called *Paktu Chieng-Lam*. The word *Paktu* means ‘a gate’—the ‘Gate of the Palm Tree.’ The gate near the hospital is called the *Paktu Pa-Leng*, ‘the Gate of the Red Bush.’ Only these two gates are still in perfect condition. There are about a dozen others, but the arches of all of them have disappeared.

The name *Keng Tung* means ‘the District, or Place, of Toong.’ *Keng*, or *Chieng*, means ‘a district.’ The word is in common use here, as in the names of Keng Tung, Chieng-mai, Chieng Hung, and so on.

* Are very great.

The word '*Toong*' refers to *Toong-ka Ra-see*, the 'Hermit *Toong-ka*'—a legendary person who drained off the lake which once filled the Keng Tung plain. *Toon-ka* is still one of the titles of Keng Tung.

The modern town of Keng Tung is said to be only 97 years old, and to have been re-built by the present Sawbwa's grandfather. The site, however, is an old one. The Sawbwa's *Haw*, or Palace, was originally a *Wa* settlement. An official history, or *Yaza-win*, has been kept for ages. It is still entered up yearly.

A curious legend is told concerning the next gate to the south (the one near '*Lone Tree*'). It is said that a *Hpay*, or Minister, while building a pagoda there, was summoned by the Sawbwa. Being himself unable to attend, his enemies misrepresented the cause of his absence, and in consequence he was condemned to death. As he passed through the gate on his way to execution, he said: "let any Sawbwa die who passes here." Therefore, no Sawbwa ever goes through that gate.

Many other customs are observed with reference to roads. No corpse may pass the Sawbwa's palace. The routes by which funerals must travel from each quarter of the city are laid down, and any deviation is punished with a fine.

It is the custom when men are sick to place little mud figures of men and horses on a bamboo tray along the various roads by which the *Nats*, or Godlings, pass.

Thus the *Nats* are appeased. Such trays are often seen lying near the various gates of the town.

Beside the *Paktu Chieng-Lam* gate, there is a much smaller wicket, called *Paktu Lam* (Black Gate), through which condemned prisoners are passed out of the city to the execution ground near our town house at Chieng-hka. We had always regarded this wicket with interest, wondering if it really was so used. In this Buddhist land there is strong objection to taking life, and there had been no executions for many years. However, in August, 1916, there was a triple execution, and sure enough the little gate, which was overgrown with creepers, was cleared out over-night. Next morning the three condemned men were taken through it. They were first given a good dinner in the market place as they passed. As this tragic procession, and the beating of gongs, came nearer and nearer to our house at Chieng-hka, we fled out to the *jheels* and shot snipe till it was all over.

An account of the execution written in Burmese by a witness records that the condemned men "Ai Yee, Ai Pein, and Ai Nam were brought forth on the 14th day of waxing of the month of *Wa-gaung* 1278,* at 9-30 A.M. Hpaya Hka charitably fed them according to custom in the market. Having eaten and drunk to their satisfaction, they proceeded to the execution ground at Haung

* A.D. 1916.

Lat, where in one place, and all together, they were *pushed off* * at 11-30, and immediately died."

Beside the 'Black Gate' is a monastery called the *Kyaung Chieng-Lam* whose monks are said to rush out and rescue condemned prisoners as they pass by on their way to execution. We watched this monastery also for a day or two, wondering if the monks would live up to their reputation. Had they managed to drag the prisoners to the altar, presumably their lives would have been spared, for that, together with the rite at the 'Black Gate,' and the dinner in the market place, is *toan-zan*, or 'custom,' and you cannot trifle with *toan-zan* in Burma. However, in this case, the monks made no move at all—perhaps because the prisoners were convicted of atrocious murders.

Capital punishment, as I have said, is avoided wherever possible. When it is inevitable, the end is made as easy as may be. In this case, one of the Sawbwa's Ministers, a member of the very *Sanum*, or council, which passed sentence, personally paid the cost of the prisoners' last meal. There is no doubt but that in all such cases drugs are obtainable to deaden suffering. In this (as in so many other things) we may trace the age-long influence of China amongst these people. For bullying, so I am told, you must go to our own jails. However that may be, it is a fact that a prisoner in the Sawbwa's jail will move Heaven and Earth, and sham every

* *Hpyot chyar yueh.*

imaginable illness, to avoid transfer to a Government jail. The Sawbwa's jail is situated right in the middle of Keng Tung, and opposite the palace. In fact, not long ago when a prisoner escaped, and a hue-and-cry had been raised all over the country, he was found three days later hidden in one of the most private apartments of the palace.

Riding out through the gate and over the plain towards Loimwe, you come at last to Murng Lap.* In winter we reach it by a short cut through the paddy fields, and by wading the Nam Lap River which winds across the Keng Tung plain. But in the rains this path is sometimes dangerous. On one occasion two of my Gurkha sepoy were carried off their feet at the Nam Lap ford. One managed to get out lower down. As he had stripped at the ford, he lost all his clothes. Naked, bruised, half-drowned, and very frightened, he reached Murng Lap with difficulty. The other lad, a nice, smart little fellow, was never seen again, though the Sawbwa sent out parties who searched the banks for miles.

The word 'Murng Lap' means '*Country of the Chop,*' and refers to a legend of the hunting of a deer, which was cooked into some sort of dish at this place.

* The word *Murng* (which is spelt *Muong* by the French, and Mōng on some of our maps) means 'place' or 'country of.' *Wan* means 'village': *Pang* means 'camp': *Nam* means 'river': *Ta* means 'ferry': *Loi* means 'hill.' One or other of these words occur in the names of most places in the Shan country.

From Murng Lap the road begins to rise steeply. As you climb, the Keng Tung valley opens out below. You look back across wet rice fields to the *Lone Tree* which marks Chieng-hka, where our Keng Tung house is. *Lone Tree* is visible from every corner of the home valley. It is an invaluable landmark where it stands in a corner of the old brick battlements of Keng Tung. It is a *Kanyin* tree.* The *Kanyin* is not very common in the Shan States, where it is called *Mai-yang*. But there are some fine copses of it near Ta-Kyi-Lik, and at Murng Kwan on the Siamese border. The Shans tap it for oil.

Half-way up the Loimwe hill the Shans have found a rock with a depression on it, faintly resembling a foot-print. They call it "the Royal Foot-print of Buddha," and have laid gold leaf upon it and placed a few small offerings there. They have built a neat shed over the rock, and passed a thread round about to exclude *Nats* and evil influences. Such a thread is called *Pa-yeik cho* in Burmese. It is often found round the trunks of peepal trees. Folk sometimes bind a thread round their own wrists to keep off disease. Where a path branches off to this little shrine, there is now a bench with this invitation in Burmese carved upon it:—"If you are breathless, rest. If weary, sit. This is the *Thekin*'s† good deed." (*Pan hley-ien nar*.

* *Dipterocarpaceæ*.

† *Thekin* is the Burmese equivalent for *Sahib*.

Maw hley-ien taing. Thekin Kaung-hmu.) Here you can give the ponies a halt. Further up there is another seat called *Jas Bahadur's Seat*, because Subadar Jas Bahadur of the Military Police originally placed it there, along with an inscription on stone, in memory of his son. The seat is kept in repair. A shed has been built over it, and an adjacent spring of water fenced round. It is a quiet spot. I believe *Nats* haunt its silent glades and inhabit the trees. A drone of insects fills the sunny air, but they are no longer insects which sting and bite, for *Jas Bahadur's Seat* is more than 5,800 feet up. In fact, the road drops from here on its way to Loimwe. But this morning the glade is full of young Gurkha lads, who have 'fallen out' to rest a while. They are volunteers who, even in this remote outpost, three hundred and fifty miles from the nearest railway, have heard the call of duty. What, I wonder, is their conception of the great war? Something very far short of the reality no doubt. Here on the Yünnanese border, the thunder of the conflict is heard only faintly—as I have heard the roar of avalanches caught up by the mountains, and echoed into some remote Himalayan glen. So these 'volunteers' 'fall in' again and march away thoughtlessly, to meet the great adventure or the great tragedy of their lives.

Up to the end of 1916 more than 5,000 military policemen, out of a total of about 15,000, had volunteered and gone on active service. Outposts like Loimwe, besides watching the frontiers, each act as small training





THE LAKE, LOIMWE.



THE MILITARY POLICE BUILDINGS, LOIMWE.

centres : receiving raw material, and passing back batches of volunteers again, semi-trained for service. Up to the 1st April, 1917, Loimwe had contributed in this way 66·2 per cent. of its full establishment. Still the Gurkha lads poured in—younger, smaller, more fat-headed, and more diverse, as the drain began to tell. Yet of them all, number 3431, Recruit Gole Lama : caste *Nak-pa Bhutia* : a native of Lhasa itself : born and bred at Walung within a mile of the Dalai Lama's palace of Potala : was surely the greatest curiosity cast up out of the deep, by the convulsions of this World War.

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Loimwe occupies a long bare ridge, with a lake below it. The whole beautiful panorama leaps suddenly upon you out of the woods, if you turn aside up a path to a hill-top called *Wonderland View*, and look across wooded ravines to the long, grassy ridge of Loimwe. Trim little stone buildings lie scattered along the ridge, and below them is the lake. There are also two other lakelets amongst the hills. Mountains rise up behind Loimwe, falling away range on range for a hundred miles, to where the furthest faint ridges stand in Siam, or across the Mekong in French Indo-China.

Dusk creeps into the deep valleys. Every fold in the Loimwe ridge is full of shadow, and the trees cast long shapes across the turf-land. It is all very beautiful : and high above the quiet hills, masses of white cloud

rise into the blue sky, like bold snow mountains. Those clouds mean a great deal. They mean that the dreary rains are gone, that hills and roads are open again to climb and tour upon, that the brilliant Burmese Winter is at hand, when breakfast is taken in the summer-house, and tea on the sunny lawn.

LOIMWE.

Across the opalescent lake
When dawn its surface softly kissed,
The bugle called. The echoes wake
The slumbers of a new-born day,
And stir the forests of Loimwe
About the "Hill of Mist."

Dusk! and the woods stand dripping wet.
The clinging mists are swept away.
Across the lake in silhouette
The homing cattle seek their rest.
The sky is paling in the west.
Night settles in Loimwe.

Wonderland View is just under 8,000 feet. My Gurkha sepoy cut a path for me from there down the mountain. It passes a solitary hermitage where a good Burmese *Phoongyi* used to live. This monk, Oo-thi-ha, had spent several years in Siam. On his way back to Burma he halted in Loimwe for the rains, at which season it is not customary for Buddhists to travel. He became so much liked, that he was pressed to stay for a while. Shan *Phoongyis* are by no means good, austere monks like those of Burma. They indulge in every luxury. They eat after mid-day, drink wine, take opium, and smoke cheroots. They are not strictly celibate. They handle

money, and even ask for it, and I have myself seen them openly gambling at *pwes*. For any one of these offences a Burmese monk is unfrocked, and driven out of the monastery as an imposter. The Shan Sawbwas first, and then the people themselves, are responsible for tolerating this gross abuse of the sacred robes. A Loimwe woman: A Keng Tung *Phoongyi*—these are terms of contempt. So Oo-thi-ha was very welcome. He did a great deal of good here during his stay. Several lads became *Koyins*, or novices. The villagers of Yang-hka and Mung Lap repaired their monasteries, so that he might pay them a monthly visit. However, Loimwe Village is too confirmed in its wickedness (wine, women, and gambling) to walk long in the path of righteousness.

Oo-thi-ha was a man of rare austerity. He often ate almost nothing at all for long periods. He had a keen sense of humour, and once told me an amusing tale against his own people. "Of course you know, the flesh is weak," he said. "Even we Burmese *Phoongyis* have our weaknesses. There was once a monk who was pressed by a pious old woman into admitting that he very much liked a certain curry which she made from the leaves of a creeper growing on her wall. Such an expression is improper, for Burmese *Phoongyis* should be indifferent as to what they are given to eat. The monk learned to regret his weakness, for the pious old lady gave him that curry daily, till he was thoroughly tired of it.

“Then one day the woman’s house was burnt down.

“‘And the creeper?’ asked the monk anxiously—
‘is the creeper also destroyed?’

“‘No’ they said. ‘The creeper is undamaged.’

“‘Ah!’ he sighed. ‘I am indeed punished for my greediness.’”

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Now compare these simple Burmese monks with the ‘holy man,’ who occupies another glen. The smoke of his lonely fire can be seen curling up from his solitary hut. He is out of India—a ‘*Fakir*,’ or ‘*Bawa Gyi*.’ He is smeared with ash. His head is a mop of disgusting matted hair. His evil eyes glitter unnaturally from excess of drugs. He hopes shortly to be delivered of a *Nat*. Unfortunately His Holiness will be deported in spite of his interesting condition, for *he* it is who supplies all the hemp, and *bang*, and *ganja*, which drives men mad, and makes sepoy ‘*run amok*’ with kukris. The police have just secured seven pounds of this potted madness in the lonely hut. His Holiness will, I am sure, be followed into exile with few regrets. Can we wonder if one day Burma cries out against Indian emigration, just as Canada and Africa have done?

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From *Wonderland View* the road descends the hill, and skirts a little lake which was originally planned by a Military Police Havildar called Harkabir Thappa, who put up a barrage across the valley at his own expense.

This path is only one of many which we made. The Gurkhas put tremendous energy into such works, and we reclaimed many miles of path which my early predecessors had made, but which the jungle had obliterated again.

I have a very soft spot in my heart for my sturdy, fat-headed Gurkha sepoy of Loimwe. Under the paternal rule of Subadar Garjan Singh Thappa, their contentment is patent. Here is a community in which unrest and intrigue have no place. These Gurkha lads, dressed always in putties, shorts, jerseys, and slouch-hats, are as evidently Government property as if marked with the broad arrow. They are part and parcel of the Military Police buildings, as decidedly solid as the very brick and mortar. Their being is rooted here—often permanently, for many retire and settle in Loimwe. Their atmosphere is soldierly. Military routine is dear to the Gurkha. No marriage is complete without blank ammunition. Their ideal of music (Heaven help them) is the Military Police bugle band. Nothing appeals to them so solemnly as the '*General Salute*,' which they sound hundreds and hundreds of times during the *Dusserah*, when the Goddess *Kali* appears in a military great-coat! And at the very very end, when their brave, devoted spirits depart hence, their last need is a bottle of Coffee Shop kerosene.

They say wild animals die violent deaths. Somehow, tragedy often dogs these simple children of Nepaul too.

There was one lad here who had dropsy. He was too ill to travel home. The case was hopeless. It was only a question of time. So at dusk one evening he turned his face to the wall, and quietly made an end of it with his pen-knife. The night orderlies found him. I always admired that poor lad's fortitude. Ah ! how he had longed to see Nepaul again—once again.

There was a marriage here last week—only ten days ago. The bride was Jippu, daughter of Maitraj Limbu. The bridegroom was a Havildar* in the Battalion. He had come up all the way from Taunggyi for his wedding. Next day they went away back to Taunggyi. I have just received a wire from the Salween ferry. "Jippu thrown from pony and killed." They say she was dragged over the road a long way, when the pony bolted. Poor little ten-day bride !

I can never regard my Gurkha lads as entirely human. They are clannish like animals, wholly aloof from the outside world, and supremely indifferent to what does not concern Coffee Shops or Wood-cutting. Any change which upsets the precise routine of antiquity, is an abomination unto them. From 'Rouse' to 'Retreat' they do the same things daily, blowing as many bugles as they possibly can about it. They even hate to vary their clothes with the seasons, preferring for

* Sergeant.

choice hot over-coats for summer, and diaphanous vests for winter. I have known an escort tie up its bedding three days in advance, for fear of being late : and I never knew a sepoy yet who would not strike his tent over-night if he dared.

In contradiction to all that, my Gurkhas are remarkably broad-minded in other ways. They invite all the local tribesmen to their *Dusserah* festival, and make them dance and eat. Smitten by some strange attraction, the Gurkha often walks about hand in hand with a man of whose language he knows no single word. At one festival they were anxious to engage the Sawbwa's Burmese theatrical company, or '*natch*.' I thought they said '*Nats*'—and wired to the Sawbwa :—"Please send your Burmese *Nats* (Godlings)." Ashamed to admit that he had never heard of the presence of Burmese *Nats* in Keng Tung, the poor Sawbwa made diligent search after them for two days.

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The lake immediately below Loimwe reflects the sunsets which burn down every evening into the Keng Tung hills. It is a lake of many moods. Sometimes at dusk, it makes a picture in black and white. It catches the red sunsets, and the delicate colours of dawn. It repeats great mountains of white cloud, or dances joyously with sun-beams. It is very deep, and is said to claim one human victim every year. Occasionally,

on dark nights, a mysterious ball of light moves about the marshes at its eastern end. Some say the light is only marsh-gas, but of course really it is ghosts.

Beyond, is open turf-land where ponies graze, and where we play golf according to our several abilities. Round about are forests, with our three or four houses half hidden by trees. Gardens surround the houses, each reflecting the character of its owner. The first is only in embryo, a protest to the apathy of its last owner, who allowed it to fall into neglect. Alas ! how often we inherit rubbish-heaps where gardens should have been ! The place has been transformed already by Shaw's labours. Shaw is on 'special duty' here. I am unable to say how many happy hours I have spent with good, sympathetic Shaw, or how many nights I have dined and slept under his hospitable roof. Nor can I ever acknowledge the help he gave me in my studies. The second garden suggests an exact, scientific mind. Rare plants with Latin names struggle bravely in nasty concoctions of soot and brick dust. When they survive (which they often do somehow) they are really splendid. Here, catching caterpillars, you will find Grose, an ideal Frontier Assistant Superintendent—kind, courteous, long-suffering. He steams in an atmosphere of alarms, collected and potted from Keng Tung, where they breed. But Chinese raids, piastres, opium, plague, Indians, the French, the missionaries of many jarring sects, all these weigh lightly, as compared with a

bucketful of four thousand and three caterpillars, upon his buoyant soul. The strife and stress of frontier tides ebb and flow about him, leaving him cool and calm. Nothing (short of decanting whiskey) ruffles his serenity. These two, Grose and Shaw, are the companions of my 'Loneliness,' and with them Loimwe will always be most happily associated in my mind. Their friendship has made the Keng Tung State an enchanted land for me, and in my solitude I have found unfailing support in their sympathy.

The third garden belongs to a man with large ideas. New ground has lately been fenced in, wherein a few sickly cosmos bloom prematurely at a height of two inches. They are all that matured of a landscape garden! One day the place will be overwhelmed by a Eucalyptus forest (ordered by wire)—an ambitious idea which I regret to say cost me, for this is *my* garden, no less than a five-pound note.

In March and April all the seeds which were sown in November make a great display. Then my garden is a blaze of snap-dragon and hollyhock, of dianthus, phlox, carnations, and mignonette. The first showers of rain help to bring everything on, and also drive away a pest of red-ants which attack sunflowers and plants with similar thick, soft stems. Unluckily, green beetles come with the rain. They destroy the phlox, and eat their way down into rose buds, just as the roses are about to open. Hundreds of thousands of caterpillars

attack the dahlias. Borers damage the big trees. One borer is a huge horned beetle. Another is a sort of caterpillar, which ejects round pellets of sawdust from its boring. Ceaseless warfare is waged all the time against pests both above and below ground. There are, however, lots of friendly visitors too, and none more welcome than a rare humming-bird moth, which I have seen in May, poising at dusk over the blossoms, and dipping its long proboscis amongst the petals. Large numbers of bees collect in January. They often swarm in my roof, and subsequently die all over the house. Many are also killed by wasps, who hunt the bees mercilessly, and even drive them out of the boxes in which I hive them. Wasps, however, have a powerful enemy of their own. They nested in Grose's front door one year, and most gratuitously attacked my dogs. Their destruction was decreed: but before anything could be done, Nemesis overtook them in the form of huge hornets, who destroyed the wasps one by one, till none were left. Even the grubs were carried off. The raid of these hornets was conducted with cool, relentless precision, and lasted three days. Burmese hornets are of enormous size. It is said that five stings would kill a man. I saw a Gurkha almost faint from one sting in the neck. But luckily, even hornets have an enemy. I once watched four Bee-eaters attack them. They tore their papier-maché nest to bits, knocked each hornet's head against a bough, and ate him.





TAUNGGYI LILIES, LOIMWE.



'PINE COPSE,' LOIMWE. (*Pinus Khasya.*)

The jungle comes close up to my garden. Where flowers and forest mingle, I have a seat, with these words of Sir Edwin Arnold's carved upon it :—

“ Ever and ever fetching secrets forth, it sitteth in the green of forest glades.

Nursing strange seedlings at the cedar's roots, devising leaves, blooms, blades.

This is its work upon the things ye see : the unseen things are more : men's hearts and minds.

The thoughts of people and their ways and wills, those too, the Great Law binds.”

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Beyond my fence the hills are densely wooded. Here and there pines mingle with the other trees. In January the woods of Loimwe are full of white and scarlet rhododendrons. The white rhododendrons of the Rainy Season bloom in June. From February to September a wonderful succession of orchids flower on the higher branches, shyly withholding their beauty. Some are green, with brown spots and scarlet throats. Some are white with mauve or yellow eyes. Some grow singly like dainty snow-drops, and others again have handsome heads of blossom. In June a tall white lily hangs its bells, to hide the beautiful brown leopard-marking of its interior. A month later it is replaced by a yellow lily, and in the garden by the gorgeous white Taunggyi lily, which has no rival. When that is gone, a strongly scented green lily takes its place in August. August and September are the best months for wild flowers. The ground is literally carpeted

with them then. A little red trumpet grows on the trees. A tall spike (which is either red or white) stands in the deepest jungle. A plant like a red and yellow torch clings to rocks. All these have a fragile beauty of their own, and fill the woods with splashes of colour. Along with them is a much more sombre flower, which I can only describe as a great tangled ball of thin, twisting, white and yellow petals and brown pollen bags, which are arranged and poised with unequalled daintiness. A beautiful rambling rose blooms in the Sam Tau country during the winter. One day some competent botanist will make great discoveries here.

A year ago it was as well to carry a revolver in these solitary jungles. But since then, new walks have been opened out. Clearings have been made where the finest panoramas of hills rise up against Loimwe. That unruly jungle has been disciplined. Now we call it *Home Wood*. Level walks have been cut round the spurs, and old paths have been reclaimed from the bracken and saplings, which had obliterated them. The hills are less lonely now. I carry only field glasses and a light cane. The field glasses deal with a multitude of birds in the trees, and the cane with snakes, of which also there are multitudes at certain seasons. Loimwe is undoubtedly a snakey place. The commonest reptile is a small brown snake which grows to a length of about a foot. It frequents the path a good deal, and is easily trodden on.

It appears to be harmless. But these frequent encounters are disturbing all the same, and have schooled us into wearing stout gaiters. Another common snake is a light green one, which swells and flattens its neck when enraged, and is altogether more formidable. When ready to strike it folds itself back into loops like a compressed spring. Luckily, its bright colouring makes it conspicuous. I have only seen one cobra here. It was a young snake, about two feet long. It was dark brown, almost black-brown, with faint brown lines across it at intervals. This variety has no spectacles, but is unmistakably a hooded cobra. There is, by the way, such a thing as a hoodless cobra. I have seen specimens in Chitral, and at Sheik Budin in the North-West Frontier Province of India.

But the most curious of all the snakes I have noticed here are two separate kinds which change colour when enraged or frightened. One is a tree snake. I saw it in May. In repose its colour is brilliant, foliage-green. It is as beautiful as any of the abominable tribe can be. But in anger, the front end changes to dull olive-green with conspicuous black bars and spots, of which there was no hint a moment before. The other kind, which I saw in July, is dull green in repose. But when irritated, its body becomes much darker, and also develops black markings, while the head and neck turn bright red, giving this angry reptile the appearance of a red-hot poker. It is most extraordinary. Many snakes here swell and flatten the neck when enraged,

but the action is entirely different to the spreading of a cobra's hood. That more people are not bitten is wonderful. This immunity is due to the good-will of *Taw Saung Nat*, the forest Godling, who lives in the trees. The *Nat*'s temper, however, is uncertain, and one cannot be too careful. One day one of Shaw's Shan servants quite unintentionally offended the *Nat*, and fell sick in consequence. The *Nat* was greatly enraged, and as soon as this became evident, the Shan gave up the useless struggle, and died without further resistance.

One is apt to regard *Nats* as rather fanciful beings, because probably they are so to the Burmese. But they are very real to the hill tribes of the Burmese frontier. My closest connection with a *Nat* occurred in Mesopotamia, where I was commanding a Kachin Company. The *Nat* took possession of one of my Kachin sepoy, and through him made hopeful prophecies regarding the war. He also said that all was well at home, and that the spirit of a Kachin who died in Busra had returned safely. Such a possession is called '*Mee-Thoi*' in Kachin. I presume it is induced by excitement, or by self-hypnotism. The medium goes off unexpectedly into a very genuine trance, during which he dances slowly and utters his prophecies.

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So you must walk warily from my house to *Grose's Delight*, where a seat with a thatch roof over it has been placed in one of the best clearings. Beautiful mountains,

green and deep blue, and dappled with the shadows of clouds, spread east and south. Beyond them, seven marches away, lie China, Siam, and Haut Laos, the remotest province in French Indo-China. Somewhere amongst the far blue hills, the Mekong flows down from its unknown cradle. In the valley below you, lies the main road from Keng Tung to Siam. So the seat here has carved upon it the name *Siam Road*. Along that road a Siamese army marched on Keng Tung in about 1854. According to the Keng Tung State annals, the Siamese have invaded the State three times—in 1849, 1852, and 1854. There seems to be some confusion as to the exact dates, but apparently the Siamese reached the very walls of Keng Tung once, if not twice. An Army that marched *viâ* Murng Hpayak* may have passed along the valley below Loimwe. This Siamese army was terribly punished by the Shans, as it retired through the hills.

In October, and again at intervals during breaks in the Rains, mountains of white cloud rise over the hills into the blue sky—reminding one that the adjacent Chinese Province of Yünnan is well called “*Land of the Southern Cloud*.”† There is another clearing and another seat a little further on at *Enrix’ Retreat*, a solitary glade where amazed Kaws sometimes come upon the *Sau Sibbo*, the Soldier Chief, addressing vocabularies to the empty Heavens.

* Map Square D.V.† *Yun*, Cloud : and *Nan*, South.

In the Rains crickets roar on the trees, but they are not so noisy, I think, as those on the Myitkyina side, which really almost drown the noise of the engine as you travel up through the jungles. Up there, each office has to keep a boy to hunt crickets off the trees; otherwise they would drive you mad as you worked. There are some big trees near one office with an old sepoy cricket-hunter in charge. One day, enquiry led to the disclosure that this sepoy had been so employed from his youth, when the tree was still small. Under cover of this duty he had successfully evaded any other kind of work all his life. It is a good record. But the achievement of a Havildar in the Delta who, it is said, illuded all his British Officers for 38 years, is even better.

I have often wondered whether the old cricket-hunter was a knave or a fool. If he had ever taken a lantern to the trees at night, he would have seen the crickets emerge as grubs from the ground and climb slowly up the trunks, visibly growing before his eyes as they rose. At a height of six feet he would have found 20 or 30, with their wings freshly emerged, like tender leaves. At twelve feet he would have found them strong and gauzy, and ready for flight. He might have killed them all. But, after all, tree-crickets were his bread and butter—an abomination in the ears of Sahibs. He would be more than human (and oriental) had he slain his golden geese.

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Beyond *Enrix' Retreat* several paths meet at *Piccadilly Circus*. *Mekong Point* is the furthest point of *Home Wood* towards the Mekong. Thence you may take level loops of the Contour Road, called respectively *Jutland Battle* and *Kitchener Road*. There is a fine clump of *Pinus Khasya* at *Pine Copse*, where the wind sighs gently through the trees. *Khasya* is the three-needle pine. It is found on the hills from 2,000 to 7,000 feet. The mountains to the south, between *Keng Tung* and *Murng Hsat*, are covered with these pines for a distance of three days' journey. The same kind also grows at *Kalaw*, and is now used in the manufacture of Burma matches. The only other pine found here is *Merkusii*—the two-needle pine, which grows in the Salween valley, and also beyond *Yang-hka* on the road to the Mekong. *Merkusii* is a much bigger tree. The clear bole is often 100 feet high. It does not usually occur above 3,000 feet.

The Loimwe hill ends in a spur called *Keng Tung Point*. Here, again, there is a bench, from which you gaze over an abyss, and across glistening rice fields to where little columns of smoke mark the site of *Keng Tung*, twenty miles away. In fine weather the *Sawbwa's Haw*, or palace, can be easily seen, and so can the *Lone Tree* at *Chieng-hka*. Villages lie scattered over the plain and foot-hills. The headman of one of those villages is a wizard. At least, so the villagers say. He, poor man, stoutly denies it. It has been his misfortune that things he admired or praised withered and died.

At any rate, his presence has become intolerable. I am waiting with interest to see how the Sawbwa will settle the matter. He cannot very well cut the headman in two, as Solomon would have done. But something original of that sort is clearly required.

Brilliant winter weather begins in Loimwe in November. That is the best time for those mountainous white masses of cloud which I admire so much, as they tower up above the hills into a marvellously blue sky. In January an abominable wind begins, and blows ceaselessly for weeks and weeks. It really spoils the best season, and is very bad for the temper. Then comes summer. Loimwe is burnt brown, and water almost fails. Spring arrives in March with a shower or two. The trees burst into leaf, bracken shoots up, and the brown earth is covered with a gossamer of green blades. So day by day the hills become green, except where fires, started by the Kaws, creep and spread through the undergrowth, without, however, doing much damage to the bigger trees. Where the hills are being cleared for cultivation, the smoke of forest fires hangs heavy over the country, blotting out the sun. This is the dry season when Loimwe Village sets itself on fire to the great delight of the sepoys. Now also a Shan woman, raiding my chicken-house at night, drops a match which sets the whole place ablaze. I am left to digest the lady's voluble denouncement of chickens, and their habitual carelessness with matches! The January wind goes on getting more and more abominable

till May. Then the Rains break. The Heavens fall, dropping in a single week five out of the annual allowance of 57 inches of rain. The suffering gardens revive. Dahlias rocket up, and later on Taunggyi Lilies unfold their splendid trumpets again.

I need not dwell too insistently upon the solitude. But it is there always, and we learn to fear it, as weeks and months mount up into years. Our small community consists of only three Englishmen—Grose, the Assistant Superintendent, Shaw on special duty, and myself in command of the Military Police. We are seldom all here together, for there is work in Keng Tung, as well as a vast area of frontier to tour over. We are often separated for weeks on end. Meetings are sufficiently rare for celebrating now and then with a select bottle of 'fiz.' The silence is sometimes hard to endure, and war news, which only reaches us in 'chunks' once a week, makes solitude all the more unbearable. The loneliness induces a sort of intellectual paralysis. The wells of action dry up. We toy uncertainly with work which might normally be despatched in two minutes. We are busy all day doing nothing in particular. Only the frontier tours bring blessed relief from monotony.

Conceive, if you can, what such a life must be when the few Europeans that there are are at bitter feud, exasperating each other with all the petty annoyances they can devise. Many an old office file could show the childishness of grown men, and what a Hell they

can make of any '*Burmese Loneliness*,' when two or three are gathered together for the express purpose of worrying each other. Personally, I cannot measure the misery of it—for our intimate coterie wrangles over nothing more serious than etymology, and the merits of sherry over vermouth. High words arise only out of strategy, books, and snipe. I have never met more argumentative opponents, nor ones whose discrimination both of whiskey and ethnology is more helpful to correct analysis. Much of what we have settled is reflected in these pages. Much more remains still too uncertain for proper determination. And out of it all have developed friendships more valuable to me than amassed rupees, intimacies which I know will remain for an enduring possession.

* * * * *

All through the Rains mists come pouring over the Loimwe ridge in foamy cataracts, enveloping the hills and woods, melting away in glimpses of lake, and obliterating again. Clouds enfold and engulf us in their wet, gloomy embrace. Then you learn why Loimwe is called the *Hill of Mists*.

ON OUT-POST.

A rift of sunshine, after days of rain.
Then clinging mists come bowling down again
Wreathing and white—like billowed Vapour Seas,
Obliterating hills and looming trees.

Stillness hangs leaden over wood and hill :
The very voices of the birds are still,
Until the silence beats into the brain
Stuns, crushes it—then beats on it again.
A paralyzing feeling of *ennui*
Develops into deep despondency.
Volley of silence roll along and seem
Like booming, like a rising tempest's scream.
Then madness roams about. The strongest men
Brace every nerve to meet the silence then.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ENCHANTED WOOD.

Bright little timid eyes watch me go by :
Shy little birds fill the woods with their cry.
Brilliant the colour of wings as they fly.
Dear little birds in the wood.

I HAVE never believed much in Latin. So I cannot tell you anything very scientific about all the birds in the Enchanted Wood. Nor do I think that that will matter much. Their interest lies not in what that are called, but in how they live and act, and in what the people think of them, and what quaint and fanciful stories are told about them. Besides, Latin names are often inappropriate. That of the Burmese *House Crow—Corvus Insolens*—is one of the few suitable ones. As it happens, there are practically no Crows at all in Loimwe,* and only *Jungle Crows* in Keng Tung. *That* is the locality of the Enchanted Wood, but as it includes the low plain of Keng Tung and the still lower valley of the Mekong, as well as the hills of Loimwe, which are from 5,000 to 8,000 feet high, the field is a large one, and what I have to say is of general, as well as of local, interest. Indeed, probably all the birds found commonly in the Shan States, and in similar parts of Burma,

* To be exact—there are three.

are represented here. And as soon as you begin to know what to look and to listen for, the woods become peopled with the most extraordinarily attractive inhabitants. Their song and plumage is so beautiful that the wonder is you never noticed them long ago. In my own mind I class the birds of the Enchanted Wood under three heads, namely :—(1) Those I know by sight and sound ; (2) those I know only by sight ; and (3) those I know only by sound. This last is the largest group of all, for the birds whose cries are most familiar, who call to us most incessantly from the depths of the forest, are precisely the ones hardly ever seen. The monotonous, metallic ‘ *tonk tonk tonk* ’ of the *Coppersmiths* is heard unceasingly on the Keng Tung plain, as throughout all the East. Yet, crouched high up on the boughs of peepal trees, their handsome green plumage, scarlet crests and gorgets, and yellow throats, are not very often seen. Though few people know the *Koel*, or *Hot-weather Bird*, by sight, all have cursed its incessant, maddening cry. I have heard an untimely Koel call in Loimwe at the very end of November. The leaves are falling then, so that birds are easier to see on the bare branches. The Koel is much like a Crow, but smaller ; and it has a longer tail. Early in the ‘ Open Season ’ another Cuckoo, which I never identified, cries with almost breathless rapidity—the female joining in between each note of the male with a more melodious whistle.

The finest songsters in the Enchanted Wood are the *Shamas*. I believe it was from the song of these birds

that my family adopted a private 'whistle,' just because it was the most persistent of all the outside, hot weather calls which penetrate an Indian bungalow. That was more than 25 years ago. The whistle has been in constant use ever since, and we have made our presence known to each other, often unexpectedly, in many parts of the world with the Shama's cry. There are many other birds besides, whose calls would make convenient private signals. You can even arrange a code, just as dacoits and burglars use the hoots and shrieks of owls for communicating with each other. A husband, having waited at a dance in cold passages till 2 A.M., might forcibly express his impatience to his wife in the ball-room with the menacing shrieks of an owl. It would need practice of course, but would be well worth the trouble. At least, I should think so, though at present there is no woman on earth for whom I would endure such misery. The cry of '*Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw*', a Burmese Cuckoo, might indicate that you are cheerfully disposed; while the three sad, descending notes of the Shrike, which begins its dismal cry in July, might be a club signal to your wife to leave her '*zareba*,' and come along home—'*I'm fed up*.'

The male Shamas are dark brown, or black, with chestnut fronts. The females are not so dark, and have drab fronts and shorter tails. These shy birds are not easy to identify, except by the fact that no others sing so well and so continuously from about June to August. At the end of August they suddenly cease.

On the other hand there are bold birds like the *Crow Pheasants*, whose glossy black plumage, scarlet eyes, and chestnut wings are familiar enough, but who, for all their outward courage, never betray their cries in the open. Yet theirs is the low, moaning ‘*whoop whoop whoop*,’ which is heard round the bungalow all day long. The Shans and Burmese, by the way, believe that the breast of the Crow Pheasant is good for asthma. They prepare it as a curry with the calabash gourd.

Other birds like the green *Kootar Kars*, and certain kinds of Cuckoos are rarely seen, not so much because they are shy, but because it is their habit to frequent the tops of tall trees, where they are hard to find amongst the foliage, even while uttering their well known cries. Probably the best known bird in all Burma is a Cuckoo called *Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw* whose cry, as I have already mentioned, would make a convenient private whistle. *Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw* calls practically without ceasing the whole day long from about April till July, when he suddenly stops. Yet I have only seen him twice. On one of these occasions he was being hotly pursued by a Minivet. The cry of this bird is exactly expressed by the Burmese words he utters :—

Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw
Aung-gyaw ley-htan

which means “ Brother call the dog. Aung-gyaw will shoulder the bow.” *Yauk-hpa* really means ‘ brother-in-law,’ but it may be best translated as ‘ brother,’

because the Karens, so I am told, use the word 'brother-in-law' where other folk would simply say 'brother,' or 'friend.' Ages and ages ago the Karen hunter Aung-gyaw cried "Brother call the dog. I (Aung-gyaw) will shoulder my bow." In that hunting Aung-gyaw was killed. His spirit, now incarnate as a bird, haunts the forest still, calling, calling all through the day:—
'Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw. Aung-gyaw ley-htan.'

Of course here, in the Southern Shan States, this Cuckoo speaks Shan, and says:—

Nai-tau pan-mok

which means 'The old lady is sticking flowers in her hair.' In China this same clever bird speaks Chinese, saying:—

Khwan-Koang Khwan-haw

which means 'Exchange labour, exchange work,' i.e., 'You help me to-day, and I will help you to-morrow.'

The Night-jar, which the Chinese of Yünnan call *Kwung Kulu*, is never seen at all, though its insistent note, repeated every few seconds throughout the night, is one of the familiar night sounds of the forest.* That plaintive, sorrowful cry must often and often have penetrated the thoughts of men who live lonely lives along this Yünnanese frontier. There is deep pathos in the story of *Kwung Kulu* as the Chinese tell it. In a former life *Kwung Kulu* (the Naked One) was a wood-

* There is a note upon this bird in '*A Burmese Enchantment*,' but I have been able to enlarge upon it here.

cutter's wife. Her husband *Chung-dzur Fung* died one day in the forest. That evening the sad wife sought him through the woods, calling his name desolately :—

‘ *Chung-dzur Fung ! Chung-dzur Fung !* ’

Now, reincarnate as a bird, she continues her lonely search night after night. There is no one now to care for her. She is neglected and naked. So the darkness has cast its mantle about her. You may never see her. You would be struck dead if you did. But you will hear her any dark night searching through the jungle for ‘ *Chung-dzur Fung ! Chung-dzur Fung !* ’

THE NIGHT-JAR.

With bitter grief the Night-jar's heart is wrung.
All night she searches for her missing mate ;
Calling with plaintive cries for “ *Chung-dzur Fung !* ”
For “ *Chung-dzur Fung !* ” she cries disconsolate ;
Unloved, uncomforted, seeking her mate.

Ah ! *Chung-dzur Fung*, the forester is dead ;
And *Kwung Kulu* is fearful for his fate.
She searches, calling through the forest dread,
Her spirit as a bird now incarnate.
To-night she searches—Ah ! so desolate.

The Chinese of Yünnan have many pleasing fancies. To-day, as I write in August, it happens to be the 15th night of the seventh month of the Chinese year—a night when every Chinese house is brightly lit. A little feast is spread to welcome all the dead who have come back home to-night. How happy these simple folk must feel with their dead standing again amongst them—the beloved ones they knew, and also the generations of

ancestors, of whose substance they are the fruit. All these are gathered home to-night.

There is also a Chinese legend about the stars that Chau Sheh Chwen told me, as we looked out along the *Heavenly River* last night.* The Chinese believe that a new star is set in Heaven whenever a child is born into the world. Every man has his star. It is great or small according to his merit. When he dies, his star in the firmament goes out, for then the God *Beh-doe-syin* extinguishes that star.

* * * * *

Besides the birds I have mentioned, there are many others in this Buddhist land which are also re-incarnate spirits. One is known to the Burmese as *Taw Loan Hgnet* (Jungle Secure Bird). It is the re-incarnation of a Witch-doctor. By its presence a locality is kept free of poisonous snakes and other dangers. Its cry is :—

‘ *Oan bwa bwa. Oan bwa bwa.* ’

Another bird is *Htan yea yu Hgnet* (Toddy-wine Drunken Bird). It is the incarnation of a drunken toddy-palm climber. Its maudlin notes are supposed to call drunkenly for a feast—‘ Chickens, pigs six. Roast them, roast them. ’

‘ *Chyet wet chauk gaung*

Chyet wet chauk gaung

Tyaw yaw—Tyaw yaw. ’

There is also a pious old lady who in her life-time wished her husband to build a pagoda. She still calls

* The Chinese call the Milky Way ‘ *Tien-haw*, ’ or the ‘ *Heavenly River*. ’

to him as a bird from the woods saying :—" Oh old man oh ! I told you to build a pagoda. You havn't built it "

" *A-po gye oh !*
Kyaung sauk ba so.
Sauk hpey go."

I have never heard this bird myself, but I am told it is found in Katha, and has been heard also at Takaw in the Salween valley. So apparently it likes a hot climate. It is said to be shy.

In Burma, the Iora is one of the most popular little birds. It is called *Shwe Pyee Zoe* in Burmese. This again is one of the birds more often heard than seen. It covers up its nest with cobwebs. Long long ago, there was a ruffian who was to be hanged for fraud. Being tied up in the forest pending his execution, he began to wonder how he could escape. Presently a simple fellow came along, and the ruffian began to call out '*Shwe Pyee Zoe : Shwe Pyee Zoe,*' which means 'I will rule the Golden Country.'

The simple fellow said, " Friend, why are you crying *Shwe Pyee Zoe ?* "

The ruffian replied " Oh ! I am to be hanged, because I refused to rule this country. But now, since the people force me to it, I am obliged to accept the throne. Therefore I say 'I will rule the Golden Country.' But I do not wish to do so at all. If you will take my place, you are welcome to it."

So the fool took his place.

When the executioners came, he cried ‘*Shwe Pyee Zoe : Shwe Pyee Zoe*’ as long as he could, but of course it did not help him in the least : and now, incarnate as a simple little bird, he still calls it from the woods.

Shwe Pyee Zoe is one of the creatures who call their own names. The Burmese say there are seven who do so :—

Ko na-mey

Ko-kaw

Kuhnit hpaw

meaning “ Who call their own names, are Seven.” They are :—

Zee-gwet, the Spotted Owlet.

Dee-doke, the Barn Owl.

Tit-tee-du, the ‘ Did-you-do-it ?’, or Lapwing.

Tau-teh, the Tucktoo.

Shwe Pyee Zoe, the Iora.

Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw, the Burmese Cuckoo.

Oo-aw, the Common Cuckoo.

CREATURES THAT NAME THEMSELVES.

Seven little creatures small

Call their names the whole day long.

First, the *Tucktoo* on the wall

Tau-teh : tau-teh : is his call :

Bringing luck at even’ fall

By his joyous hunting song.

Of the Owllets there are two :

Dee doke Zee gwet to and fro

Darkly flit the whole night through.

‘ Did-you-do-it ?’ *Tit-tee-du*.

Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw, and Cuckoo,

And Iora (*Shwe Pyee Zoe*).

Some are souls re-incarnate
Who recall their dying words.
Calling early, calling late,
Telling their pathetic fate :
Happy in their present state.
Simple, artless little birds.

This 'Did-you-do-it?' is the *Burmese Red-wattled Lapwing*. It is peculiar to Burma. The Burmese consider it an unlucky bird. In the old days they would abandon a journey if a Lapwing came screaming over-head. On the ground it is rather shy, but on one occasion a pair of them ran along the road before me, with the obvious intention of leading me away from their nest. They continued to behave thus for several hundred yards, and even after my dogs had begun to hunt them about. The Burmese Lapwing has a black head, with red eye-laps, and two white patches behind the neck. The collar is white. The whole body is brown above and white below. It stands on long yellow legs. As it goes off with its startled cry 'Did-you-do-it? Did-you-do-it?', it shows a white V across its extended wings. The Burmese think that the Lapwing sleeps on its back with its legs in the air, fearing lest the sky should fall on it. Considering how widely foreigners disagree about sounds, it is curious to note that all hear the Lapwing's cry very much in the same way. We call it '*Did-you-do-it?*'. The Gurkhas say '*Tit-tee-hoot*' : the Shans '*Teh-teh wet*' : the Muhsos

‘*A-tey-tey-houé*’: the Burmese ‘*Tit-tee-du*’: and the Chinese ‘*Dee-dee-ju.*’

* * * * *

Cuckoos are not easy birds to observe. I have, however, seen the *Malkoha Cuckoo* alive and dead, both in Loimwe and Keng Tung. It is dark metallic-green. The tail feathers are tipped with white, and the longest is one and a half times the length of the body. The beak is dull green. There is a scarlet patch over the eye. The bird, when seen, is silent, and of furtive, skulking habits.

One could think of more creatures who call their own names, such, for instance, as *Boke*, the Crow Pheasant. But the Burmese only allow the seven I have mentioned. Of these the Tucktoo lizard is amongst the most popular. He occupies every verandah, and has a place at every wall-lamp, where his call of ‘*Tau-teh, Tau-teh*’ is considered lucky.

Hpoot, the Guana, on the other hand, is supposed to be an unlucky sort of lizard. His entrance into the house denotes approaching poverty. At one time, so the Burmese say, there was friendship between *Hpoot*, the Guana, and *Badat*, the Edible Lizard. Their common plainness was a bond between them. Finally, they decided to tattoo each other. *Badat* was done first, and has now become a remarkably pretty lizard. When he had been thus transformed, he threw a handful of ash over *Hpoot*, the Guana, and ran away. So poor *Hpoot* is unlucky still in his sombre colouring

The Burmese are extraordinarily observant of bird life—though it is usually not till mature age that they become mines of information on the subject. All these stories, though not very easy to discover, are nevertheless well known to the Burmese. Most of us have probably heard some of them already in one or other of their various forms. Such information has this stirring quality, that it fills the otherwise silent woods with friendly forms and voices, and relieves an otherwise monotonous life with endless charming fancies.

There are eighteen kinds of Owls known to exist in Burma, but, as 'Harrington' says, the majority of them are nocturnal, and "the only evidence of their presence is their hooting and weird and ghastly cries."* It is one of these sinister, unseen birds, I think, that the Burmese know under the different names of *Aung-Wa Hgnet* : *Hgnet Soan* ('Witch Bird') : *Hgnet Hso* ('Bird of ill-omen') : and *Lin Kaung Poe Hgnet* (the 'Bird that shoulders her lover'). Dark stories are naturally associated with it. Its cry, if heard in a sick-room, proclaims the approach of death. This Screech-Owl is the unhappy incarnation of an unfaithful wife. One of its names, 'the Bird that shoulders her lover,' recalls the legend of how this faithless wife and her lover were done to death by the outraged husband, who, pretending to have gone blind, discovered all. Knowing that the lover lay concealed

* 'The Birds of Burma.' This book and Finn's 'Garden and Aviary Birds of India' have been consulted in identification.

in an earthen jar, he scalded him to death with boiling water. Then begging his wife to help him dispose of the body of 'a thief,' he tied and strapped the corpse over her shoulder. Having reached the river, the husband told his wife that he knew everything. The marks of his blows, and of the thongs and straps which secured the corpse to her, are to be seen in her plumage still.

The husband flung her into the water, where she was forced under by the weight of her guilty load. In memory of that terrible scene, the bird is said to have two heads. The screams she uttered on that dreadful night, are echoed now in her screech.

* * * * *

It is of course a matter of common knowledge that Crows will attack Owls on sight in day time. Down in Magwe I once captured a magnificent Owl which was being done to death by Crows. It was a pale brown bird with a splendid white ruffle. I eventually released it at dusk ('for merit,' as the Burmese say). Further, it is well known that certain Cuckoos lay their eggs in Crows' nests, and are thus amongst the few living things that really score off Crows. These things, however, were not always so. Formerly, the Burmese say, the Crow and the Owl were great friends. But one day the Owl was wounded. He sought medical advice from the Crow, who in turn sought it from the Cuckoo, who suggested a successful cure. The Crow then asked the Owl for a fee, which, being refused, resulted in the

present feud between them. The Crow consequently attacks the Owl on sight, and the Owl has been obliged to hide itself until night-fall.

At the same time, the Cuckoo demanded a fee from the Crow for *his* advice. Having nothing to give, the Crow undertook always to hatch out one Cuckoo's egg every season, which is consequently now laid in the Crow's nest.

The Burmese believe that only three eggs are ever found in a Crow's nest. One is the Cuckoo's, and the other two hatch out into a male and a female Crow. In time, the Mother Crow mates with the son, and the Father Crow with the daughter. What truth there is in all this I cannot say ; but it is reported that originally the Father Crow deserted his wife while she was busy hatching the family. Enraged by this conduct, the Mother Crow sought a divorce in the court of the Chief-of-the-crows. A judgment was passed as follows :—

Pey ta thee : Chee ta tha

which means ' *Pey tree* one fruit : Crow one son ' ; signifying that Crows shall never mate together for more than one season : for the *Pey tree*, which is a kind of palm, only fruits once in its existence.

In connection with the feud between the Crow and the Owls, some Burmese say that it arose from the jealousy which *Zee-gwet* (the Spotted Owlet) and *Dee-doke* (the Barn Owl) showed towards the Crow, when formerly he was the king of birds. They spied secretly

on him, and caught him in the act of eating filth. Then the birds knew him for the low-born fellow he really is, and dethroned him. They put the little scarlet Minivet in his place, with the title of *Hgnet Min-tha* (the Prince of Birds).

The Burmese name for the Crow is *Chee-gaan*. It is derived from the words *Gyi* (big), and *gaan* (blind). This is because the Crow was once much bigger than he is now. But when he tormented a poor old hermit in his forest monastery, a prince of that country caught the Crow, and ordered that he should only be 'as big as a half closed hand' (*lek hnin ta soak shee ya mey*). Also he put out one eye. That is why the Crow now looks at you side-ways.

* * * * *

Weaver-birds are common on the Keng Tung plain, where they build their colonies of funnel-shaped, hanging nests, in palms and peepal trees. There is a big colony in the garden of the *Wat Yan-Kone* pagoda, where they are specially tame and easy to observe by reason of the protection afforded them by the Buddhist monks. It is really very interesting to see them fly back with a bit of fibre, and weave it dexterously into their nests. In the breeding season the male birds develop handsome yellow plumage. The Burmese declare that Weaver-birds catch fire-flies, and illuminate their nests with them at night. A friend of mine once saw a nest in which a fire-fly was embedded in a lump of clay. This

seems to support the story ; and indeed, Weaver-birds are clever enough for anything.

Black and white *Chinese Magpies* are fairly common on the Keng Tung plain. I believe they do not extend very far west, and are not seen in Burma as a rule. They are much like English Magpies, which, by the way, are 'unlucky' birds. At home you 'take your hat off to a Magpie.' Here, the birds seen in November have a great deal more white about them than birds seen in August. I suppose that this is because the majority seen in November are young ones.

The dear little *Magpie Robins* (or Dhayals) are also found near Keng Tung from November till June. These cheery little birds, as their name suggests, are entirely black and white.

Three kinds of Bulbuls are common. The *Burmese Black Bulbuls* are colourless dark-grey little fellows, with black crests. The *Red-Vented Bulbuls* are dark-grey. The breasts are ashy-grey. They have black crests, and conspicuous red seats. The *Red-Whiskered Bulbuls* also have red seats, and are just like the Red-Vented, except for the addition of vivid red patches under their eyes. They have clear white cheeks. On the whole, they are the most attractive of all these three noisy, cheerful little birds.

The Burmese call the Red-Vented Bulbul *Bo-pin-nee*, or 'The Red-Seated Chief.' The Shans call it *Nok-Sau-Pu*, which means 'Bird Lord Betel,' or 'Betel

Seller's Bird,' from the fact that its early morning song is supposed to rouse up the people who have to go and gather fresh betel leaves.

Black-Crested Yellow Bulbuls, whose general colouring is black and yellow, have pronounced black cockades. They are comparatively rare here, except in the vicinity of Murng Hsat.

The *Mynah* of Loimwe is the common, brown *House Mynah*. But down on the Keng Tung plain there are at least three other kinds more common. One is the *Siamese Mynah* which is really a very handsome bird. He is dark-brown, almost black, except for white patches upon the wings and tail which appear when he flies. He has a tuft of feathers over his beak like a coronet. He is essentially a jungle bird and extraordinarily numerous, though rather shy.

The second is the *Pied Mynah* which is brown (or black) and white. The plumage is most irregular and varies in each bird. The third is the *Black-Necked Mynah*, which is, I believe, the biggest of all Mynahs. He has a noisy but pleasant cry. Though shy, and less common than the Siamese Mynah on the Keng Tung plain, he is still very much in evidence with his creamy-yellow head, and soft brown upper plumage, dashed with white bars. He is also easily recognised by his broad black collar, by a yellow patch under the eye, and by the creamy-white of the under plumage. This is a jungle bird, and goes about in pairs, and not in flocks like other Mynahs.

The Burmese call the Mynah *Chwey za-yet*, or 'Buffalo Mynah,' from its habit of sitting on the backs of buffaloes. A certain amount of sanctity attaches to it from the fact that its talking, as it prepares for bed at night, is supposed to be a recitation of holy stanzas.

The Burmese call the Imperial Green Pigeon *Hgnet Nga Nwa*, or 'Mr Ox Bird.' Its cry is said to be like the lowing of cattle : and I need hardly add that it is the incarnation of a buffalo.

And that reminds me that there is a legend which explains why the buffalo has no front teeth in his upper jaw. Perhaps you knew that he hadn't any. Or perhaps, like me, you will have to go and look into a buffalo's mouth to satisfy yourself about it. If so, my advice is :—'First catch your buffalo.'

Anyhow, long long ago, the buffalo was sent out to repeat the following words :—

Pey ta thee : Chee ta tha : Sābā thone thee

which means, 'Every season when the *Pey tree* fruits once, and the crow rears one family, let there be three crops of paddy.' Unfortunately, the buffalo, who is very stupid, got muddled and said, 'let there be *one* crop of paddy' instead of saying, 'let there be *three* crops.' So that is why there is only one crop of rice every year, and also why the buffalo has no upper front teeth, for his master was so annoyed, that he kicked them down his throat.

As a rule there are several versions to each of these Burmese legends, and you can take your choice. With reference to the loss of the buffalo's upper front teeth, it is also said that formerly the horse had horns but no upper teeth. Having invited the buffalo to come and bathe with him, he put off his horns. The buffalo put off his teeth; and so they went down into the water together. But the horse, who has an evil mind, came to the bank, seized the buffalo's teeth, and made off with them, leaving his own horns and lower teeth behind for the buffalo. Seeing this, the poor buffalo cried:—

Ngar Ha! Ngar Ha!

which means 'My property! My property!'. That has been his cry ever since; and from this incident enmity arose between the horse and the buffalo, which you may have observed upon being shied with into a ditch. However, at the time, the horse, unable to contain his amusement, laughed:—

Hee Hee Hee.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ENCHANTED WOOD.—*continued.*

THE *Blue Burmese Roller* is one of the very handsomest birds in the Enchanted Wood. At rest, his soft plumage and sea-green cap are not conspicuous. He only discloses the exquisite blue of his wings when he opens them for flight.

But examined closely through strong glasses, the whole breast is seen to glow with rich tones of violet and pale green. He is very much like a Jay, but the true Jay, which is rare in Burma, is distinguished by a blue and black check on the wings, and by a white patch on the back. The Burmese believe that it is unlucky to kill a Roller. They say that if you shoot one a corresponding gap will occur in your own family. This is said also with reference to birds like the Babblers which move about in gangs, or families. The Roller does not usually do this, but sits alone on dead boughs, on telegraph wires, or on similar commanding perches. It is only when he takes to flight that he reveals his hidden blue beauty.

The Burmese call the *Drongo*, or *King Crow*, *Lin-mee-zwey*.

The name is derived from *Lin-da*, a Vulture : *mee*, a tail : and *zwey*, to catch : i.e., 'Vulture's-tail-catch-bird.' This refers to the way in which the Drongo

became King of all the birds in a contest which was to settle the matter. It was decided that whoever flew highest should be King. Of course the Vulture flew high above all the rest, and after resting a little on his wings, descended. The King Crow, however, had seized his tail. Being thus carried up, he was able to ascend still higher. He has ever since maintained this supremacy, and is frequently to be seen chasing Crows and Vultures, as well as birds smaller than himself. He is specially conspicuous because of his habit of choosing commanding perches on stakes, buffaloes, and posts, from which he sallies forth on expeditions, returning again to the same place. The King Crow, or Drongo, has a forked tail. The *Lesser Racket-Tailed Drongo* is exactly like him at a little distance, except that the tail is not forked, but squarish, with the two central feathers slightly elongated. He has just the same habits as the King Crow. The strangest member of the Drongo family is the *Large Racket-Tailed Drongo*. This bird is only found in the deepest parts of the jungle in Loimwe, but is plentiful along the Siamese border. He has two long quills protruding from the tail. There are two little tufts of feather at the very end of these quills, which float behind the bird as he flies. This Drongo is a glossy metallic-blue, with hair-like feathers on the head. He has some pretty notes, but is rather shy.

Malay Spotted Doves are seen in numbers, on and near the road. They have dark ruddy-brown, mottled

wings, and a patch of black, dotted with white spots, on either side of the neck. Doves, by the way, are credited in India with piety : for it was a Dove which strove to indicate Joseph's place of confinement in the well, by calling '*Yusuf Ku : Yusuf Ku*' (Joseph is in the well). The Crow on the other hand is infamous, because he tried to betray Mahommed's hiding place in the cave of Jabel Thaur by calling '*Ghar : Ghar*' (Cave : Cave).*

I am sorry to have to exclude the little Hoopoes from my friendship ; but all the evidence goes to show that they are dirty little birds. Pallas records that a Hoopoe once nested in a human corpse. Harrington says they like "smelly surroundings" and "eject foetid fluid" ; and someone (Moses I suppose) condemns them in Leviticus XI, 19, that they "should be an abomination unto you."

The bird actually mentioned in Leviticus is the Lapwing, but this is supposed to be a mis-translation for Hoopoe. Finn gives the Latin name as *Upupa*, and the Greek as *Epops*.

Mahommedan legends are much kinder to the Hoopoes, which are said to have flown in great numbers over King Solomon, so as to shield him from the sun. When told to choose a reward, they asked for golden crowns. These were given to them. But they were

* Lockwood Kipling.

so persecuted for the gold, that Solomon mercifully exchanged the crowns for the feather ones they wear now.

Wood-peckers are called *Thit Hkawk Hgnet* in Burmese, i.e., 'Wood Knock Birds.' They are extremely numerous in the Enchanted Wood. Here in Loimwe, there are at least six varieties, but Harrington says thirty-six kinds are found in Burma. The only one of the six I have identified is the *Spotted-Breasted Pied Wood-pecker*—a bird with a red cap, and with the body barred black and white. It is by no means the finest. I call the most splendid the *Great Golden-Crested Wood-pecker* by reason of the golden mane extending up the neck, and ending in a crest high over the head.* It is a shy, apprehensive bird, and is most often seen as a bronze streak, darting away at top speed through the trees. Another kind I call the *Zebra Wood-pecker*. He is black, with white zebra stripes across the body. The face is white, and there is crimson under the tail. The breast is drab with black spots splashed down it. Many of the Wood-peckers are energetic carpenters. The rapping and knocking of Wood-peckers is heard everywhere in the Enchanted Wood.

The Wood-pecker, by the way, has now the distinction of having been mentioned in a British War Cry: and a typically inconsequent one too. What must the

* This is obviously not the *Golden-Backed Wood-pecker*. It has no crimson about it.

Germans have thought on receiving the following reply across ' Plug Street,' to their latest and most venomous hymn of hate ?

I put my finger in the Wood-pecker's hole.
But the Wood-pecker cried " Got straffe your soul.
Take it out. Take it out. Take it out.
Remove it."

Babblers skulk and hide in thickets where the hill-sides are covered with bush and scrub. They are fussy, excited, nervous birds, calling unwelcome attention to themselves by their jabber and furtive movements. There are many here which appear to be unidentified. The most interesting Babblers in Loimwe are *David's Scimiter Babblers*, so called because of their long curved beaks. They are pretty brown birds, just like thrushes. They have chestnut flanks. Their white breasts are streaked down with black spots and bars.

The *Laughing Thrushes* occupy the same bushy country, and are also nervous and noisy. But as they move on ahead of you with hops and short flights, they are more conspicuous. These birds, like their cousins the Seven Sisters, always move in gangs of six or seven.

Observation shows that birds each have their own favourite locality. Just as you move in a fixed area between your house, the office and the club, so also the same King Crows, Rollers, Mynahs, and Hoopoes frequent the same posts, glades or lawns, where you can be pretty sure of meeting them again.

Minivets are comparatively common in Loimwe, and with the Great Chinese Barbets are the showiest birds in the Enchanted Wood. The male is crimson ; the female yellow. Both have black markings on head and wings. The yellow female Minivet is nearly always accompanied by her scarlet husband. Another species found here has the entire head and shoulder jet black, but is otherwise scarlet. The Burmese call this lovely bird '*Hgnet Mintha*'—the Prince of Birds.

There is no observation made in this book that may not be obtained with field-glasses and a little patience. I have never once found it necessary to shoot birds for examination. Sometimes I have come across them dead, but I have found that sooner or later even the shyest birds fall victims at short range to a pair of glasses, and seem too surprised to move. In such lucky encounters I have had Shamas, Crow Pheasants, and even nervous Scimiter Babblers, under the closest observation for five minutes at a time. It was evident that the birds decided I was not dangerous.

Quite my most extraordinary experience was with a female *Pin-Tailed Green Pigeon* early in December. Her presence in the Shan States was not hitherto known for certain. She seemed anxious to show herself to me, and allowed me to walk slowly up to her, to within arm's-length. I saw the clear light olive-green colouring of her head, neck, and underparts, and the deeper green of her wings. The plumage is quite plain except for some dark bars and splashes

under the tail. I noted the grey beak and pink feet. The bright little eyes have black pupils, with grey rings round them, and broad red rings round those again. This bird has a peculiar habit of using its beak to climb about with, like a parrot. Eventually, after half an hour's interview, during which I lit a pipe within three feet of her, I left her picking berries.

In that very same week of December, I found a couple of *Great Chinese Barbets*. These are rather rare birds. What I took to be the male has a splendid yellow head and breast, with olive-green on the wings. The beak is red. A great splash of black passes through the eyes, turning up at the ends, like the eye-brows of all good Chinamen. His mate is less richly yellow, but rather olive-green. The black splashes through her eyes are less conspicuous, and her breast, instead of being plain yellow, is streaked down with dark lines. These birds are shy, but make their presence known by an incessant call, rather like that of the Koel. They occupy the extreme tops of trees. The very same day I came upon the 'kill' of a male bird, which put me in possession of all his feathers.

I found it useful in my research to collect all the feathers seen lying about. A fresh 'kill' usually gives every kind of feather. I began to notice that 'kills' always take place in certain regular places, suggesting the successful hunting of individual Hawks and Owls. If I suffered now and then from *ennui* in Loimwe, I also spent intensely happy days ranging through its forests,

noting how Pan plays his pipes softly sometimes—and sometimes harshly. I have tried to defeat *ennui*, for it should not torment a man of hobbies. It is not loneliness that is insupportable. We grow accustomed to that, and we make queer friends to comfort us. But it is the call of the outside world which just now, with war raging everywhere, stirs us up, and makes inaction positively painful. Our preoccupations blind us to the beauties of Nature. But those beauties, if only we seek them, can powerfully soothe anxiety. There is nothing so satisfying as communion with the silent hills. Time is then only measured by the age of ancient trees, and by the return of seasons. Space is only limited by the mind's capacity to range unhindered through the realms of imagination. There is more enjoyment in this than in artificial pleasures. There is greater profit in it than in all the experiences of conventional life. Worldliness makes men old and knowing. The hills keep them young and simple, with the simplicity of deeper understanding.

When the march of Time is measured by the Seasons as they go
Through the forest, and the Sun-birds hover where the blossoms
glow :

When the lichen and the mosses link the very dawn of things
With the Present : and the Future passes on on Bulbuls' wings—
I have paused, and heard the whisper of the grasses at my knees.
I have heard the claim of brother-hood that's murmured by the bees.
I have learned my true relation with the mysteries of Space.
I have known the voice of comradeship when water falls like lace
From the precipice : when shadows cross the sunny hills, and when
The dawn has paused regretfully to linger in a glen.
I have heard a timid greeting in the Night-jar's lonely cry,
And the Stars have called me ' brother ' as they crept into the sky.

There are times when silence is almost terribly oppressive, as in dull, misty weather. But, as a rule, the birds fill the woods with cheery sounds. The stillness of fog is death-like, just because all those bird voices, which pass unnoticed, are really necessary to our comfort. We miss them directly they are gone. A restful silence is really the blending of a hundred unobtrusive little sounds.

It is curious how soon even nervous birds get accustomed to terrifying noises, such as the roar of trains. I was thinking of this the other day on the rifle range, as I watched the unconcern of some Bulbuls. In Jhelum, where the ranges were built in a swamp, good Snipe shooting was to be had in the rifle-butts. I have since read that birds nest in 'No Man's Land,' between the British and German trenches in Flanders. In the lull of a bombardment, the voices of Nightingales are often heard.

The *Times* Correspondent in his account of the Battle of the Somme (July, 1916) says:—"The most wonderful and appalling thing was the belt of flame which fringed a great arc of the horizon before us. The noise of the shells was terrific, and when the guns nearest to us spoke, not only the air but the earth beneath us shook. All the while, amid all the clamour and shock, in the darkness, and as night paled to day, the Larks sang. Only now and again would the song be audible, but whenever there was an interval between the roaring of the nearer guns, above all the more distant tumult, it

came down clear and very beautiful by contrast. Close by us, somewhere in the dark, a Quail kept ceaselessly urging the guns to be '*Quick-be-quick*'."

On the other hand another Correspondent observed that numbers of Linnets, which are apparently sensitive little birds, were found dead in Lincolnshire with their ear-drums split by the shock of cannonading in France. That was in 1915. In 1916 a Linnet survived a Zeppelin bomb, which blew its cage to bits. This, I suppose, can only be ascribed to the brutalizing influence of war on Linnets.

It was observed that Pheasants showed great uneasiness during the North Sea Battle of January, 1915, though the rumble of guns was only just audible.

I have mentioned here only a few of the finest birds of the Enchanted Wood. But it contains many, many others of which some are so small that they look like swarms of bees as they fly in flocks through the jungle. Very few of them are showy, except the tiny *Burmese Avadavats*, which have bright scarlet breasts. But even the quiet-coloured ones are neat and pretty, as for example the tiny grey Tits with white eye-brows, and rufous tails—truly charming little morsels of life. The *Purple Sun-birds* of course are brilliantly coloured. They hover about the Cotton trees and Bohenia when these flower, dipping their long, curved bills into each blossom. All these minute little birds seem, of all living creatures the simplest and happiest, as they flit and chirp in

the sunshine, or fly in swarms with joyous, bounding flight.

VOICES OF THE ENCHANTED WOOD.

From dawn, when the red-trousered Bulbul's soft cries
Are warning the Sellers of Betel to rise;
When Sparrows are up in a chattering throng,
The voices of birds call you all the day long :
Moaning and whistling and song.

The Rollers' soft plumage gleams blue as they go
And brilliant the Minivets' scarlet wings show.
The Weaver-birds to-and-fro hurry their flight
Busily weaving the homes which at night
Gleam with the fire-flies' glow.

The Crow Pheasants mournfully moan '*whoop, whoop,*
whoop.'
And sharp are the cries of the Swifts as they swoon.
The Wood-peckers ceaselessly tap at the tree.
The Cuckoos say "*Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw*" in Burmese,
(" Brother ! oh, call the dog please ").

Now these are a few of the voices you hear
Incessantly calling. But others are near ;
Others, of birds which have lit and have flown,
Evading your search : for they live all alone,
Shy little lives of their own.

CHAPTER X.

THE MEKONG BORDER.

To include the Keng Tung State, the Irrawaddy-Salween 'Divide,' and even the Salween River, have had to be abandoned as frontiers, and the British border has been advanced in a great salient to the very Mekong itself. Originally, the Keng Tung State, as I have mentioned, extended even beyond the Mekong. But at annexation the trans-Mekong part was cut adrift and, as related, was eventually ceded by Siam to France. For twenty-five years the French and ourselves have glared at each other across the tempestuous waters of the Mekong, until common perils at home have brought us together, changing the old, unworthy feeling of suspicion into one of sincere friendliness.

The French have had an undeniably refining influence upon us—or at any rate upon our correspondence, which is now conducted in the following style:—

“ My dear *Monsieur* the Superintendent. I have the honour to render acknowledgment of your commandments dated from Murng Hsing on the 13th. Believe me *Monsieur*, with devoted regards, and sentiments the most distinguished, etc., etc. P. S. Congrats on your show at Verdun.”

The most important ferry in this salient of the Mekong is at the village of Chieng Lap, just 100 miles due east of Keng Tung.* The road to it passes through the valley immediately below Loimwe. It can be reached from Loimwe by a path leading down through the pine forests of Pāthey.† Pāthey is a Kaw village. In the middle of it a number of rough gates have been set up close together, forming a sort of arcade. Now and then a new gate is added. Each gate consists of two upright beams with a horizontal one across them. They are just like the *Tori* of Japan, to which no doubt they are related through common Chinese origin. The cross beams are sometimes slightly curved up at the ends. Pert little wooden birds are placed along them, and chains made of bamboo are wound round the pillars. Nude wooden figures, male and female, are stood in pairs at the base of each gate.

We see a good deal of these Kaws in Loimwe. They come up to sell grass and vegetables, and to find work. They are industrious, and in this respect differ widely from the lazy Shans. They are manly and independent : free, happy children of the hills. They keep much to themselves, having no use for our law courts, posts and telegraphs, and of course less still for our hospitals. They are our neighbours just like birds and lizards. We only notice them now and then, when they return home

* Map Square E.V.

† Map Square D.U.

in the evening laughing and singing as they go. Their song is all on one long note. They have competitions all the way home, to see who can keep up the note longest without a break. Young Kaws are sturdy and tall, and have very attractive faces, until at last they take to opium. They are often well dressed, especially when, as bachelors, they are courting. They wear a blue jacket and baggy trousers, and they have all sorts of silver buttons and ornaments about them. A lot of silver rings are strung along the end lap of their pugrees. They wear pig-tails. They have the peculiar stately walk of all true hill-men, and frequently stalk up to Loimwe escorting a flock of squealing, running females in kilts. This kilt of the Kaw women is a proper kilt, being plain in front and pleated behind. Like cadis-worms, Kaw women collect all sorts of strange rubbish to put on their heads. Their bonnet is a weird collection of beads, feathers, straw, and fluff. Upon grand occasions the dress of the Kaw women is really splendid. The bill, if you had to pay it for your wife, would pain you. But the poor Kaws only get one or two dresses in their lives, and I believe one after death to be buried in. In time they get sadly bedraggled, and can hardly cover up their bodies. These people are naturally simple and superstitious. They are said to destroy deformed and weakly babies. Perhaps this is why all the Kaws we see are so well made and good-looking. The mutes, idiots, and toad-like deformities, seen so commonly in Kachin villages, are not found here



A KAW.



A KAW BOY BLOODING HIS
CROSSBOW.

Keng Tung Types.

at all.* I am told they also destroy twins which they regard as unlucky. Hot ash, it is said, is forced into the mouths and eyes of such unhappy children to kill them. The mother of twins is supposed to be possessed of a devil, and is expelled to the forest immediately after the birth. But on the whole we really know as little about the Kaws as about ants in the garden.

Before the Rains break, the Kaws burn the jungle and clear new hill-sides for cultivation, just as the Maru tribes of the Myitkyina country do. Their up-land agricultural activities are much like those of the Marus, which I described minutely on page 166 of *A Burmese Enchantment*. At other times, they wander through the woods shooting birds with cross-bows and bamboo arrows. These arrows are not tipped with metal, but are simply sharpened with a knife. Yet they are driven with such force, that sometimes they cannot be pulled out of a tree they have penetrated. The shafts are smeared with a brown-coloured poison, which is said to be deadly enough to kill even a tiger in a few hours. The Kaws notch their bows for each successful shot, just as we used to notch our catapults at school. I have also seen them 'blood' them. There are nearly always blood and feathers smeared over the end of a bow. The Kaws also set traps, which they frequently inspect. Formerly they used to bring in Pheasants, but now I am afraid they have destroyed them nearly all. The Lashi tribes

* See "*A Burmese Enchantment*," page 145.

of Htawgaw and Hpimaw catch Pheasants in the same way, and when I lived on that border, I bought several *Silver Pheasant* and *Tragopan* from the Lashis. But the birds were so badly damaged, that they usually died. The Pheasant commonly seen in Loimwe in March and April is the *Burmese Silver Pheasant*, or *Lineated Kaleege*. The under parts of the male are black, shot over with blue. Some of the feathers have a white streak down the centre. But, at a distance, the under parts look black. The upper plumage, wings, and tail of this splendid bird are white, etched over with fine black lines, which grow coarser over the wings and tail. The inner web and tip of the central, arching tail feathers are quite white. The legs are pink, and the face red. The females are dull brown, but I never examined one close. These Pheasants lurk in thick jungle, and do not take to flight if they can help it.

The trap commonly used by the Kaws is a string noose. When a bird or animal enters it, a bent stake is released. This springs erect, tightening the noose. The struggles of the captive soon complete the process of strangulation. The first of these traps which I noticed was pointed out to me by Salim, my *dachshund*. A little girl once described him as "*Oh Mother, what a low little dog*"—referring of course to his structure, rather than to his German origin. His head, therefore, easily entered the noose, and all would have been over with yet another *Boche*, had I not been present to release him.

Such traps are commonly set in a narrow jungle path. A "V" shaped fence of little twigs is artfully built near it, so as to drive game into the noose. There is a regular system of signs to indicate the presence of traps. This is necessary, as certain traps consist of a bow, which, on being released, drives an arrow into whatever is passing. This device, on an enlarged scale, is a recognised implement of war. It is almost impossible to detect it in dense jungle, where the touching of an apparently harmless creeper may have deadly results.

The leverage given by bending an upright stake is cleverly used by the Kaws to make gates shut automatically. As the top of the stake is tied to the gate, it has to bend when the gate is opened. By flying erect, it pulls the gate shut again.

Another automatic device is a clapper for scaring away birds. A bamboo is supported on a pivot, in the same sort of position as a cannon. Water trickles in at the muzzle end, until its weight makes the bamboo tip up. The water then flows out, and the bamboo falls back, hitting its breech end (which is split) against a stone, with a loud 'crack.' Needless to say, birds soon learn not to take the slightest notice of the noise.

* * * * *

The main valley, with the Keng Tung—Mekong road running down it, is reached near the village of Yang-hka. Henceforth, insects of all sorts begin to torment you ceaselessly. Their attacks vary in kind with the seasons,

but of course their real offensive is in the Rains. The horse-flies are the most troublesome of all. They infest every jungle for a hundred miles from here to the Mekong. They lurk in the foliage, and dart out upon you as you pass, until you are forced to gallop through the deepest forests. Where the road is really bad, and you have to pick your way slowly, the horse-flies find their opportunity, and punish you. The horses, mules, and dogs are nearly driven frantic by them. Smoke fires are lit in camp. I only realized how much the ponies suffered when they broke loose one night, and took refuge under my hut. The place was immediately filled with their horse-flies. My own hands became so swollen from horse-fly bites, that I had to remove my ring—and that was in May (1916), which is not yet the worst season.

There are of course all sorts of interesting birds, insects, and flowers in these low, hot forests. The jungle is so dense that big game is hardly ever seen. But it must be plentiful. At Yang-hka I saw a branch which was quite white with the crowd of 'fluff insects' upon it. They are strong jumpers, though their fluff is so frail. In Loimwe there is yet another variety which is much smaller—in fact, hardly bigger than a pin's head. At this hot season, the birds are very lively. The Koel, Coppersmith, *Kootar-Kar*, and *Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw* call the whole day long, filling even the hushed hour of dawn with their cheerful melody.

Beyond Yang-hka the path climbs up along pine-clad slopes to a ridge, and descends steeply again to Sup-lau.

Sup-lau, as the word "*Sup*" implies, is the confluence of the Lau stream with the Nam Lin river, whose valley we followed. The bridge over the Lau stream broke as I was crossing, and threw me with the dogs into the stream. Luckily no harm was done, except that I bit my tongue rather badly.

A few miles further on, one of my Chinese mules fell from the road where the path is narrow. Chinese mule transport is always employed on journeys like this. The mule was only pulled up again with difficulty. Its load bounded down the *khud*, and eventually sank into deep water in the Nam Lin, 150 feet below. However, my Gurkha escort fished it out somehow, and, to my surprise, brought it along to Murng Hpayak in the evening.

Murng Hpayak is a big Shan village.* A market is held there every fifth day. A periodical market is a popular institution in the Shan States. Even Marco Polo mentions it when describing a journey from Yünnan to Burma. He says: "You reach a spacious plain, whereon, three days in every week, a number of trading people assemble, many of whom come down from the neighbouring mountains."† His words recall the memory of many market days in these Shan plains, when strange, wild folk still "come down from the neighbouring mountains."

* Map Square D.V.

† Marco Polo, Chapter XLIII.

The name *Murng Hpayak* seems to be derived from *Hpee* and *Yak*, which both mean a demon in the Shan and Hkeun languages respectively. The legend says that when Buddha came here, he was attacked by two demons who broke their teeth on the finger he extended to them. So they were converted, and built a resting-place for the *Mya-zwa Paya*.*

It has been suggested that perhaps the Shan word for a wizard *Hpee* is derived from the *Hpai*, a race of savages who are believed once to have lived here ; and that the memory of those fierce old tribes survives in the name of the famous *Bilu* of Burmese mythology—the *Hpai-men*.

A great number of orchids are found in these valleys. Each season has its own varieties. The finest is a magnificent blue spray, which Shaw found in September. Now, in May, I collected eleven kinds, some of which were very beautiful.

In many places red ants had drawn big leaves together, fastened them into a bag with strong webbing, and made their nests inside. The pulling together of leaves is a stupendous task for these little folk. But they are well organized ; in fact, much too well organized, for they have all the offensive thoroughness and aggression of the Hun. They come out raging in furious millions on to the outside of their nest when disturbed,

* The Buddha.

and they deal summarily with anyone who dares to take his lunch under their tree.

However, the Shans eat them, and there is some consolation in *that*. The Shans eat a good many queer things, including snails and frogs. The Sawbwa once sent us a present of frogs and bamboo-tops. Bamboo-tops, boiled and served with butter, salt, and pepper, are quite nice. Frogs, however, even disguised as chicken-cutlets, are utterly horrible. The Shans use all sorts of mushrooms and fungi. Most of them are rather tough and stringy, but some are nice and I eat them regularly when they come up in June. A great deal of vermicelli is eaten here. It is prepared with meat and gravy and makes a tasty dish. The Chinese cooks in Keng Tung make several kinds of little cakes. Their sponge-cake is as good as any I ever tasted. All other Chinese food, however, is entirely beastly.

The march from Murng Hpayak to Murng Lin is 25 miles. I did not get in till 4 P.M., and the mules were very much later still. Murng Lin is the most important town on this Mekong border.* Paths radiate from here to all the frontier ferries. One turns south to the Siamese border at Ta-Kyi-Lik and Hawng Luk, and so proceeds to Chieng-mai.† Another path runs east to the French border at Chieng Lap, and a third goes north *viâ* Murng Yawng to the Chinese frontier.‡ A

* Map Square E.V.

† Map Square D.W.

‡ Map Square E.U.

market is held at Murng Lin as usual every fifth day. Fruit, fish, tomatoes, cucumbers, and other luxuries can be bought, as well as meat, rice, and paddy. There are several fine monasteries in the town.

I look back with gratitude to the *Wat Mak-an-Khang* Monastery,* where I slept altogether four nights under the benign gaze of the great image. The monastery was built a few years ago by a Chinaman. But it is Shan in style, and stands in the midst of a grove of cocoanut palms. The great sweep of overlapping tile roofs, with quaint terra-cotta figures on the eaves, and the quiet beauty of the images on the altar within, give the place an air of dignity. My fellow lodgers were six Shans, who had come from Siam with loads of glass Buddhas, which they sold in the villages as they went. On my way back I met them again with all their images spread out for sale.

On such journeys I always occupy a monastery if there is one, in preference to any other place. It is the natural refuge for travellers. It stands on the best available site, and is clean, dry, and free from insects. Pious old people spend their lives sweeping up imaginary dust from the shining cement floor. If, instead, a special hut is built, it is always outside the village, amongst the horse-flies. Moreover, a barrier is set up at once. A king in his palace could hardly feel more isolated from

* The word *Wat* means a shrine or monastery. It is commonly used in Siam, as well as here in the Shan country.



THE MONASTERY GROUNDS, MURNG LIN.



A WRITING LESSON : LITTLE SHAN NOVICES IN THE
MONASTERY AT MURNG LIN.

the people. In the *Kyaung*, or monastery, the villagers certainly come and stare for a little while, but they move off the moment they are asked to, and at any rate their curiosity is of a purely friendly sort. At dusk the *Phoongyis*, or monks, and all the small *Koyins*, or novices, who have been sky-larking round the altar all day, come in very solemnly and chant before the images. The melodious, rapid rhythm of their chanting mingles pleasingly with the voice of gongs. A few candles are lit in the dim hall. I usually add one or two candles myself. A little water is sprinkled, that the merit may be shared equally with '*all the worlds of Nats, Brahmas, and Men.*' The offering of candles ensures light in future lives, just as flower offerings ensure freshness, and leaf offerings coolness. It costs nothing to share this merit so generously with the whole of Earth and Heaven, but nevertheless I believe there is immense value in such acts. Little troubles and shadows dissolve in the dim, fragrant atmosphere of these Buddhist shrines, and float away on the music of gongs. The mellow glow of candles cast up upon the calm faces of images is reflected into many tired hearts, giving them serenity and peace of mind. And the light so reflected, shines on into the world in many kindly words and deeds. As the light of a star travels on after the star is dead, so the light from Buddhist altars shines on in the world, long after the candles have guttered out.

About three miles from Murng Lin there is a Buddha mage of some importance, called the *Lan Tawng*, or

‘ Million Brass.’ The legend says that this image, together with two others in Murng Yawng and Chieng Sen, was made out of the brass that remained over from the casting of the celebrated *Maha Muni* image in the Arakan Pagoda in Mandalay. The *Maha Muni* is extremely old, and moreover was brought from Arakan, so that this claim is merely legendary.

It is further said that the *Lan Tawng* was found lying in the jungle. When next seen it was sitting up. So the villagers built a shrine over it. The image has a hooked nose, and is not at all beautiful. But it is said that diseases of the body are cured by sticking gold-leaf on corresponding parts of the image. The gilding is therefore in irregular patches. The *Lan Tawng* is supposed to be specially powerful in the cure of eye diseases.

The remaining three marches to the Mekong at Chieng Lap are easy enough in May, but in the Rains the road is nothing but a leech-ridden swamp. The monastery at Nam Hkeun, where I halted, is a poor little thatched place. But it gave me good shelter through a night of thunder-storms. Nam Hkeun is a Shan village, but Muhsos and Kaws occupy all the surrounding hills, and the *Hpayas*, or local chief, is a Muhso. It is usual for these *Hpayas* to meet officials at the edge of their districts, and to make them little presents of candles. This pretty custom is peculiar to the Keng Tung State. I suppose that the candles are meant to light the way for the guest: but in hot, broad daylight, I have often

thought a juicy cocoanut would be so much more acceptable. Cocoanuts were ripe now, and were being carried into Keng Tung.

Many Shans and Chinese came to ask for medicine during this tour. A medicine chest should always be carried. I found quinine, purgatives, and disinfectants met such wants as I was capable of relieving. The whole of my own party took ten grains and five grains of quinine on two consecutive days, and none at all on the third. By following this course regularly, we escaped fever altogether, though we were being bitten ceaselessly by insects all the time. All along the Yünnanese frontier, malaria is apt to be accompanied by violent attacks of vomiting, which are painful and exhausting.

The horse-fly trouble increased as we went along, and their onslaught in the deeper jungle glades became unbearable. Already the Rains were threatening. Storms worked up every afternoon and blew down a good many trees across our path. Sometimes we could get round these fallen trees. But sometimes they had to be cut away with hatchets.

The Mekong is first seen near the village of Paleo,* which lies only half a mile away from the river. It comes quite suddenly into view, and you look down from the high right bank over a great expanse of water. The Mekong flows smoothly here through a broad valley

* Map Square E.V.

with the steady decision of a mighty river. Its grandeur and stateliness command admiration, as it passes down through the hills, come from God knows where.

Even here it is not navigable for any distance. But below Murng Hpong Noi you can travel safely in a dug-out to the French post at Ban Huong in seven hours. As a great waterway the Mekong has proved a complete failure. Monsieur Lapeyronie, the French *Commissaire*, when I met him, described to me the rapids below Laung Prabhan.* For eighty miles below Vien-Tiene the river is practically one continuous rapid, with frequent whirlpools. Below that again, there are rapids at Khong, where a French gun-boat was once lost. That rapid is considered impassable now. The journey up the Mekong from the sea-port of Saigong to Laung Prabhan takes two months. The country is not interesting, and much of the time is spent tediously in a dug-out behind a towing rope.

The nearer rapids are, however, of greater local interest. The most serious navigable one occurs where the river has made a loop towards the south in square E. V. (above Ban Houe Sai) and then turns gradually north again. Garnier describes these reaches as follows† :— “ La largeur du fleuve se réduisit à 150 ou 200 mètres, et la navigation redevint aussi pénible que pendant les plus mauvais jours de notre voyage de

* Map Square F.W.

† *Voyage D'Exploration en Indo-Chine*, page 362.

Vien Chan à Xieng Cang. Un chenal étroit et profond se creusa au milieu des roches qui surgissaient de tous côtés."

"Le lendemain (*i.e.*, the 18th of June, 1867), nous arrivâmes au pied d'un nouveau rapide, le Tang Ho, qui offre, dans cette saison, un obstacle insurmontable à la navigation du fleuve. C'était là que nos barques de Xieng Khong* s'étaient engagées à nous conduire."

The exact point at which the members of Garnier's expedition left their boats on their way up the Mekong, is not mentioned by name. But it was near the foot of these rapids of Tang Ho, or Tang Aw,† which is as far as native boats can go now. Garnier went up the bank before sunrise next day to examine the Tang Aw rapids in their narrowest part. He says :—"Un seul passage sinueux, d'une trentaine de mètres de large, s'ouvre dans cette ceinture de pierre ; encore ce passage est-il divisé en deux bras par un rocher. Aucun radeau ne pourrait en descendre le courant sans se briser ; aucune barque ne pourrait, même avec des cordes, le remonter sans se remplir."

Nevertheless, in later years M. L'Etaire took a French gun-boat up this formidable passage of Tang Aw. He even navigated the Mekong for a considerable distance above Chieng Lap. His vessel was the very gun-boat which was subsequently engulfed in the rapids at

* Chieng Hkong. Map Square E. V.

† Map Square E. V.

Khong when the French General on board was drowned, and M. L'Etaire himself was one of the few survivors. M. L'Etaire came and met some of us at Hawng Luk in 1917.

The rapids at Tang Aw pass through walls of dark, smooth rock. Natives who fish there not infrequently slip into the torrent and are lost. The scenery, however, is not very imposing, and there are finer gorges on the Salween. The Tang Aw rapid can be visited in three or four hours from Murg Lin, but the road, even in dry weather, is difficult.

With regard to the general aspect of the Mekong Valley at this point Garnier says: "Le paysage était d'une sauvagerie pleine de grandeur.....Ce paysage solitaire du Mékong est resté profondément gravé dans ma mémoire." And as the sun rose he heard the wonderful calling of birds in the forest. "Le disque du soleil apparaissait à travers la ligne d'arbres qui couronnait le sommet des collines: la vie s'éveillait peu à peu sous les arceaux de la forêt; les oiseaux célébraient par des chants joyeux les flots de lumière qui venaient pénétrer soudain leurs retraites ombreuses."

* * * * *

Chieng Lap* is only another eleven miles on from Paleo. I reached it after a running fight with horseflies. The monastery in which I stopped stands high above the Mekong, commanding a splendid view of its

* Map Square E. V.

rocky bed. The monastery is quite a fine building. The altar is built up to resemble a gate, with a great image of the Buddha seated in the arch.

This is the same monastery in which Francis Garnier and the members of the French exploration party were detained for some weeks by the *Hpay*, in July, 1867. Garnier's signature is said to exist still upon the wall. But as I had not heard this when I went, I did not look for it.

Chieng Lap was originally part of a State called Keng Cheng, which lay astride of the Mekong. It was split up and quarrelled over by the States of Keng Tung and Murng Hsing* on either side of the river. Later, it was a bone of contention between the French, Siamese, and ourselves, until the Mekong finally became the border between the British and French in 1896.† Garnier's Expedition reached Chieng Lap on the 5th July, 1867, and was detained there by bad weather and obstructive officials until the 23rd. The rapids had obliged them to quit the river, as I have explained, somewhere near Tang Aw, and to travel *viâ* Murng Lin (Garnier's Muong Lim) and Paleo to Chieng Lap, which Garnier spells 'Siemplap.' Letters and presents had already been sent to the Sawbwa of Keng Tung, but unfortunately not to the Burmese Resident. This official therefore did his

* Map Square F. U.

† *Gazetteer*, pages 364-5.

best to obstruct the Expedition. The Sawbwa gave the travellers permission to proceed, but afterwards wrote to invite them to come to Keng Tung. This second letter was delivered at Chieng Lap where the Expedition had come to a halt by reason of sickness, rain, bad roads, and the *Hpayá's* obstructiveness. The Frenchmen were very despondent :—" L'état de santé de l'expédition était déplorable : les dernières marches que nous venions de faire dans la forêt, dont le sol, détrempé par les premières grandes pluies, exhalait des miasmes dangereux et recélait des myriades de sangsues.....Le mauvais état des chemins, les mers de boue....., la mauvaise volonté ou l'indifférence des autorités localés..... toutes ces raisons de douter de notre réussite, jointes à un long isolement et à de vives souffrances physique, assombrissaient nos esprits et ébranlaient notre moral."* Indeed, July is not an encouraging season in the Mekong Valley ; and no doubt these Frenchmen, who laugh at us for carrying camp beds and chairs wherever we go, were ruining their health and their prestige by sleeping and sitting on the floor.

The invitation to visit Keng Tung was declined, and the Expedition proceeded *viâ* Hsop-Yawng (Garnier's Sop Yong) to Mung Yawng (Garnier's Muong Yong). Here it was brought home to them that the ' invitation ' to visit Keng Tung was in fact an *order*, and that the affronted Burmese Resident had yet to be appeased.

* *Voyage D'Exploration en Indo-Chine*, page 375.

M. le commandant de Lagrée was therefore obliged to go to Keng Tung before the Expedition was allowed to proceed on the 8th September, 1867, *viâ* Murng Yu towards Ssu Mao,* and so out of this book.

But before finally dismissing them, it is interesting to see what de Lagrée recorded of Keng Tung in 1867 :—
 “ Xieng Tong est assis sur quatre ou cinq petites collines et entouré d’une enceinte en briques de forme irrégulière, mal entretenue et défendue par un fossé profond. Le développement total de cette enceinte est d’environ douze kilomètres; un quart seulement de l’espace qu’elle comprend est occupé par les habitations..... Les demeures du roi et des grands fonctionnaires sont en bois, couvertes en tuiles, supportées par de fortes colonnes. La Ville contient une vingtaine de pagodes, aux toits superposés et aux arêtes curvilignes, dont l’architecture accuse une influence chinoise déjà très prononcée.”

All the trouble was made by the Burmese Resident. It is pleasant to read that the Sawbwa of those days was entirely reasonable. “ Sa Majesté invitait presque chaque jour ses hôtes à passer la soirée avec lui et, mettant toute étiquette de côté, les accablait de questions sur les usages français,” etc.†

* * * * *

But to return to the monastery at Chieng Lap. Chieng Lap is nearly the most easterly point of British

* Map Square F. T.

† Garnier, page 394.

India. It is certainly the most easterly village of any importance. It needs only a slight stretch of imagination to make this bit of country the meeting place of four Empires. British India and French Indo-China face each other across the Mekong. To the south is Siam, and to the north China.

At Chieng Lap, the Mekong still occupied (in May) one deep, narrow channel. Ridges of dark rock rise from the water on both sides. High up, a fringe of vegetation shows flood level. Hills rise majestically above the river. In the evening shadows creep along them and into the great river-bed, till dusk and darkness blot it all out.

Eight dug-outs are kept at this ferry. When animals have to be taken across, a platform is lashed across two or three dug-outs, as on the Salween. The villagers are not expert watermen. Rapids prevent them from going about much. They just cross to and fro, and fish a little.

The opposite village of Keng Hkok is not visible. But if you have the globe-trotter's instinct you can ferry across just to say that you have set foot in Haut Laos. The five great provinces of French Indo-China are Tonkin, Cochin China, Cambodia, Annam, and Laos. Haut Laos is the hinterland of French Indio-China, and consequently the most remote and inaccessible part of it. It cannot possibly develop until rail or river communication is established. It is probably not worth developing

in any case. The existing paths are described by the French themselves as 'the very devil.' There is a telegraph line to Murng Hsing but it is cut fairly often. Such conveniences as hospitals, schools, etc., are altogether wanting. Haut Laos, in fact, is a wild bit of country, and the people not very friendly to France. They even seem inclined to come over wholesale and settle in British territory. The Muhsos, however, get on well with the French, and this fact enabled the latter to deal with rebellions in Murng Hsing and Murng Mong in 1915.

There are four French military posts in that part of Haut Laos which interests us. At Murng Hsing* there are about 100 *Miliciens*. They have a small gun there which is of great moral value. Three days' journey south of that is Ban Hpu Hka,† a small post of 30 rifles. Four days south-east of *that* is Ban Houe Sai (Fort Carnot)‡ on the Mekong, with about 30 *Miliciens*. It is the administrative head-quarters. Two and a half days' journey up the Mekong from Fort Carnot is Ban Huong,§ where there are 30 rifles. Much further east there are posts at Murng Sai|| and Murng Hou¶—but I do not know whether they belong to Haut Laos proper. At any rate, they are very remote from our border. None of these places is very imposing. The French Officers were always anxious for us to go over, but we could

* Map Square F.U.

§ Map Square E.V.

† Map Square F.V.

|| Map Square G.V.

‡ Map Square E.V.

¶ Map Square F.T.

never manage it. "Ban Houe Sai is a grand place," said an amusing little French merchant, who came to the border to interpret for Shaw and M. Pierre. "M. Pierre collects taxes. He knows nothing else but taxes. M. Pierre is not married. Oh no ! He lives on a hill at Ban Houe Sai in a fine house—a grand house—and looks down on the city of—well, quite twenty houses." Unluckily, we could never go to the *grand house*, and the *city of twenty houses*.

On the present occasion, M. Lapeyronie, the *Commissaire*, crossed over and met me at Paleo. I conveyed all he said to Grose, and as a result Shaw (who was then Head-quarters Magistrate in Loimwe), was sent to the border in the Rains on a mission. He succeeded in rounding up several rebels and refugees and returning them to the French. They had fled into our territory, which they then used as a base for committing revenge and murder on their former homes trans-Mekong. With their arrest, ended a series of events which occupied the greater part of 1915 and 1916. Local history, however interesting to those who watch it, is apt to make dry reading afterwards. But to preserve it, I will compress the story into a few lines.

Briefly—it began in November, 1914, when the chief town of the French district of Sam Nema was rushed by Chinese brigands. M. Lambert, the '*Administrator*' was killed. The provincial treasury, containing a hundred thousand dollars, was captured, and it was

only the brigands' distressing lack of transport that prevented them from removing more than half the treasure. The Chinese remained in occupation of French territory for months, and their methods of recruiting and spreading themselves suggest German management. There were engagements at Sop Nao and Murng Hou on the 10th January and 13th March, 1915. The French threw a garrison into Murng Bounnena where it was besieged until April, when the Rains made further operations difficult.

By about June of the same year (1915) rebellion had spread to districts near our own border. The *Myoza* of Murng Hsing* tried to throw off French authority. Failing in this, he fled to China and still remains there. This *Myoza* is the brother-in-law of our *Sawbwa* of Keng Tung, who was naturally filled with fears, firstly for his sister, and secondly lest he should have to support her fugitive husband for the rest of his life—'a prospect he could not endure.'

This rebellion was followed immediately by another at Murng Mong in August (1915).† Murng Mong is isolated. In fact, at that rainy season, the French columns from Murng Hsing and Ban Houe Sai could only reach it through British territory. To facilitate their passage, Grose went to Murng Lin. Rain prevented the expedition from being a real success. Murng Mong was burnt, but the *Myoza* escaped, and brought

* Map Square F.U.

† Map Square E.V.

the number of fugitive *Myozas* in China up to three—for in the meantime the *Myoza* of Murng Yawng in our territory had had a quarrel with his own people and fled.* He luckily died soon afterwards.

In the following winter (1915-16) the French completed their work which included far more serious operations in the main theatre further east, where the Chinese bandits had remained in possession of French territory all these months. It was during these troubles that fugitives sought escape on our side of the Mekong, and (not realizing how French and British now loved each other) crossed back from there to commit acts of revenge in French territory. Their arrest removed the last element of disorder. Such is the recent history of this border—an utterly insignificant back-wash of greater events in Europe. By a curious irony of fate, punishment for neglect of duty with regard to French rebel fugitives, fell upon the Chieng Lap *Hpayaya*—the descendant of that very *Hpayaya* who held up Garnier and the French expedition in the monastery at Chieng Lap, just half a century before.

Another effect of the great War was the Foreigners' Ordinance, and a result of *that* was the discovery of some strange travellers in these distant parts. They fell under two heads, and may be classed as Merchant Seditionists and Wandering Undesirables. The Merchant Seditionists included Indians of all races and creeds.

* Map Square E.U.

Their object was to connect sedition-centres in Rangoon, Mandalay and Pyawbwe with out-posts like the Sikh *Gurdhwara* * at Chieng-mai in Siam, and with German adventurers like a certain Herr Pawelka in China. So far as the Shans were concerned, of course, these Indians might as well have spread their net over the North Pole. The most stirring loyalty is the inarticulate kind of the Shans and Burmese, of whom *not one* joined any of these movements. These ridiculous Indians all came to grief—and some of them happily to the gallows—a traitor's death facilitated chiefly by the treachery of their own kind. A native of India distrusts no one more profoundly than another native of India—and with good reason too.

Possibly one should pity the innocent who suffer a little inconvenience with the guilty in the "Defence of the Realm." But, after all, is there one innocent Indian who glibly claims the British Government as his 'mother and father,' who has raised a finger to betray those who seek to destroy the 'mother and father'?

We have reason to be grateful for loyalty, generosity, and sacrifice in many parts of India, both in this war and before it. But those bright examples only make the passive countenancing of an evil thing in their midst all the more inexcusable in the masses. Every scrap of evidence that comes to light, of sedition preached openly from Peshawur to Vancouver, reveals this one fact, that

* Temple.

of all who hear sedition, only those ultimately in fear of their necks come forward to denounce it. Yet all India is scandalized at the revelation ! A bomb is thrown at a Viceroy in the heart of Delhi. Dense crowds allow the would-be assassin to pass through their midst. It is enough to go home and wire their 'horror and condolence.' It is this passive 'mother and father' loyalty which enables criminals to escape in the very streets of Calcutta. No ! There is no need to help the 'mother and father' until the time has come to turn King's evidence. Then some one always finds his own neck more valuable than *Ghadar*.

Natives living out of India did not learn all at once that the benevolence and freedom they had abused so freely was gone. They could no longer wander about the world protected by a lenient Government, which they reviled all the time. They could no longer stroll home fresh from treason in Canada and Siam. No doubt they found it unpleasant to discover the obvious fact under their noses, that only the strong British arm they abominated, enabled them to plant themselves in other folk's country, and be an insufferable nuisance there, with their quarrels, litigation and sedition. When that noisy minority which calls itself 'India' is *really* loyal, we shall cease to read of it *ad nauseam* in our daily papers. No one proclaims the loyalty of loyal people from the house tops. It isn't necessary.

Chief amongst 'Undesirable Wanderers' was the German Pawelka. I suppose he was a patriot in his way.

He seems, in true German style, to have had plenty of rifles, ammunition, and money. He was one of those German emissaries who, to quote the Viceroy, "were flung broadcast towards our frontiers from all directions in the Far East and especially in Siam. They toiled to enmesh disaffected Indians in a conspiracy to raise trouble on the borders of Burma and within India itself." The declaration of war on Germany first by Siam, and then by China, in 1917, was therefore welcome news in Keng Tung. I have shown above the sort of discontented Indian material Pawelka tried to handle. There was also at his disposal all the riffraff of China, including bandits and deserters. Had not the Chinese revolution of 1916 directed interest elsewhere at this very moment, and inclined the Chinese to keep peace with their neighbours while they themselves turned upon the Peking troops in Ssu-ch'uan, there is little doubt but that Herr Pawelka might have changed from a 'will o'-the-wisp' into a very tough proposition.

Pawelka was an exception in this category. Most of the Undesirable Wanderers were just shameless but harmless loafers, like Suar—who wasn't even ashamed of his name—'The Pig.' He had none other. A more interesting vagabond was a Shan-Burman called Maung Po, whose travels had really been remarkable. He had loafed north in Bhamo, and south in Moulmein. From Taunggyi he had drifted here to Keng Tung, and thence through Chien-pien in China to Murng Hsing in French Indo-China, and so to Murng Sai and Laung Praban.

Then he travelled down the Mekong till arrested as a loafer near the Great Lakes. He was sent to Saigong, deported to Bangkok, for the benefit of Siam, and so drifted up north again through Siam back here to Keng Tung, where he ran his head against the Foreigner's Ordinance. All this is the journey of only one year. He had wandered thus all his life, acquiring various languages, but very little else. He was harmless. Men with genuine occupations also wander here from the ends of the earth. I have mentioned that one of my sepoy is a Tibetan from Lhasa. I have even met Hazaras from beyond Cabul. Meek Punjabis often give themselves out as 'Pathans,' hoping thus to command more respect. Few of them know a word of Pushtu.

* * * * *

From this tour to the Mekong I returned to Murng Lin, bringing with me a few French *Miliciens*, whose journey to Ban Houe Sai I was desired to facilitate. M. Lapeyronie himself had returned to Murng Hsing. These *Miliciens* were natives of Annam. The French call them 'Annamites.' The local name for them here is 'Kyau.' They have an Emperor of their own in Annam. In May 1915, their boy Emperor, who was only seventeen years old, fled from his palace, and proclaimed his independence of the French. He was caught within 48 hours, after which another Emperor was appointed. I took a great liking to these Annamites. They stopped in one corner of the monastery in Murng Lin, while I occupied another. They were wet,

miserable, and tired, and were touchingly grateful for the tea, bread, and cigarettes I gave them. "Vous êtes très aimable Monsieur le Capitaine" said one, who spoke French well. And he showed me his rifle—a *Label*—a tiny little weapon, most thoroughly suitable for such very small men—for they were smaller even than the Gurkhas of my own escort. The barrel of the *Label* is less than two spans in length, but it gives the *Miliciens* all the range they want. The rifle has a clip action. The clip is put in along with the cartridges, and is ejected automatically. In this respect, it is handier than even our '303 Lee Enfield. It holds only 3 rounds—but, as the *Miliciens* said, "C'est très vite, mon Capitaine."

The Annamites wear a flat board on their heads. This has been adopted into their uniform, and gives good protection from sun and rain. They are considered useful soldiers against such people as the Laos of Haut Laos.

As Burma has sent her sons to die in Mesopotamia, so French Indo-China has sent hers to France. But the effort made on the French side of the Indo-Chinese peninsula has been greater than that on ours. So, too, must their reward be proportionately greater. For thousands of Annamites—shy, wild and *Nat*-ridden as our own Shans and Kachins—will return to their country skilled in the science and mechanism of modern war—each one an agent of enlightenment and progress. *Tirailleurs Annamites* equal in number to half our own Anglo-Indian Expeditionary Force which landed in

Marseilles in 1914, have since gone to France. We have hardly noticed all this in the welter of recent events. Have you pictured a convoy of heavy motors, skidding and slewing across a frost-bound road in the Woevre? The fur-clad drivers *are Annamites!* Did you see a battle-plane pass out over the French lines on the Somme? It was Du Hou Vi, the Annamite air man, flying valiantly to his death.

THE MEKONG.

Born of a mountain white of cloud,
A mighty river grown :
The tiny rills of secret hills
Out in the great Unknown.

Down through a thousand miles of trees,
Lapping on shingle beach.
Then with a roar it madly tore
Along a rock-bound reach.

The waters of the far, far north
Out of the hills—and free :
By sandy place, by rapid race,
Down to the shining sea.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SIAMESE BORDER.

I VISITED Murng Lin again a year later, in January, 1917. This time I turned south in order to travel to the Siamese frontier at Ta-Kyi-Lik.* Even at this dry season, the road from Murng Lin to Pang-Kyi-Het was muddy in places, and sometimes so utterly bogged, that the villagers had had to lay down a causeway of bamboo hurdles over seas of mud. Only a few specially privileged people know how awful this bit of country is in the Rains. Each village stands in the middle of its paddy-fields, and when these are flooded, is entirely surrounded with bog. Near Murng Lin we were ferried across the Nam Lin river. This is the same tempestuous river down whose valley we have marched all the way from Loimwe. But it is quite placid now, and very pretty at this spot, though its sandy bed is full of snags. At this season it is fordable a little lower down, and I saw several Shans and Kaws strip and cross.

While waiting at the ferry for the transport and escort to come up, I watched some Kingfishers working a little swamp. All three kinds were present together—*Common*, *White-Breasted*, and *Pied*. The *Pied King-*

* Map Square D.V.

fisher, which is the least numerous in these parts, is also the most energetic hunter ; and, indeed, is nearly always seen hovering over water, while the others sit about lazily on posts and branches. All these Kingfishers were diving from a height of 20 or 30 feet, and it was really very pretty to watch them.

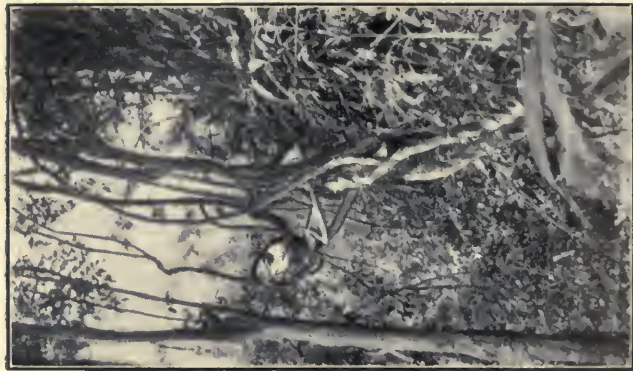
Pang-Kyi-Het, where we stopped a night, is only a jungle camp. The name means 'Camp of the *Kyi-Het* tree.' This tree, which is fairly common about here, has a curious leaf. It is as if two dark, glossy laurel leaves had been joined together end to end. The *Kyi-Het* has a sweet fruit. It is thorny, and the specimen here, which seemed full-grown, was about 20 feet high. Chau Sheh Chwen says it is found in Yünnan, where it is called *Shang-yen Shu*.

A good many different kinds of people passed to and fro along the road. The neighbouring village of Bo Pang Sa is inhabited by Shans and Yoons. Wan Hwe Hok is a Hpyen village, and Wan Shen Long a Muhso. Kaws came into camp from Po-ee-ho-liang and Kaw Pang-Kyi-Het. All these villages are hidden away in the forest. This is the main trade route from Keng Tung to Siam, and is therefore used a good deal by travellers at this season.

The surrounding forests are depressing, but also very wonderful. The great trees are covered with giant ferns and creepers. Tree-ferns, plantains, feathery bamboos, and large-leaved teak trees overhang the road.



KAWS COME INTO CAMP FROM VILLAGES
ROUND ABOUT.



THE JUNGLE.—LOOPS OF WOODY CREEPER
TWIST AND TWINE FROM TREE TO TREE.
(In the Mekong Basin.)

They are all tangled about with a miscellaneous under-growth, so dense that you cannot penetrate it for even a yard. Overhead, loops of woody creeper, as thick as a ship's hawser, twist and twine from tree to tree. A deadly stillness hangs over the jungle—stirred only now and then by a sigh of wind, by the groan of a bamboo, by the trickle of some invisible stream, or by the fall of a teak leaf which descends with what (in this deep silence) sounds like a great crash. Even the birds are depressed. The very owls seem to protest mournfully against the stillness. We have now invaded their last retreat, and *Kwung Kulu*, the Night-jar, calls from the trees close at hand for '*Chung-dzur Fung! Chung-dzur Fung!*' Now, in winter, the tree-cricketts are still; but a bull-frog breaks out at night with the shrill bark of an angry lap-dog. By day a mysterious Wood-pecker imitates exactly the lonesome creak of a bamboo.

A storm, or even a light breeze, may bring down trees across the road at any time. Many a hoary forest giant totters, and only requires one more little push to send him down with a sigh, a groan, and a crash, into the greenery below. It is an awesome sound that—the last anguish of a falling tree.

Great numbers of butterflies collect to bask beside streams on the warm, sun-flecked mud. By moving gently, you can easily pick them up on your finger. There was one beautiful orange fellow who let me handle him thus. An Atlas, and sundry blue, brown, white, and lemon butterflies came too. Only a black and

white one with transparent gauzy patches on his wings hovered continually, and refused to be touched. Two long, fragile tails floated behind him. Amongst them all was a splendid bronze dragon-fly.

We emerged from these forests at Murng Ko, which lies out in the middle of a broad rice plain. Near the village several hot springs rise in a marsh. Numbers of white Cattle-egret waded in the swamp, and one was riding sedately on a buffalo—a most absurd sight. A boy was prowling about the marsh with bow and arrow, intent on the Egrets. A Pied Harrier quartered the ground after game of his own. Another lad was inspecting a deadly system of horse-hair snares, which he had laid out in a circle of about a yard diameter. The snares were arranged in a sort of maze with five unfortunate *Green Imperial Pigeon* tied down in the middle to act as decoys. These splendid birds, which the Gurkhas called *Hookus*, are responsible for the low moaning ‘*Woo woo woo*’ which is so often and mysteriously heard in the woods. The sound has earned them the Burmese name of ‘*Hgnet Nga Nwa*’—‘Ox Birds’: for, as I have already mentioned, they are supposed to be the reincarnation of an ox. I bought one of these decoys, hoping to tame it. Its broken spirit soon revived. It showed its displeasure by ruffling its feathers, and striking vigorously with wings and beak. Unfortunately, it never recovered the power of flight, and died after a week. The head, neck, and under-parts of these pigeon are light grey; the back and wings are dark

green, shot over with a sort of bronze sheen. The under-tail coverts are chestnut, the feet red, and the large eyes crimson-brown. They are altogether beautiful birds.

The number of Green Imperial Pigeon seen in this part of the country in January is really astonishing. Several flew over the marsh at sunset, and two came down to the fatal circle of snares as I watched them through my glasses. It was quite pitiful to see the poor decoys flap their wings to welcome their friends to destruction.

As we approached the Siamese border, we began to meet numbers of Yoons. They belong racially to the Shan family, but closely resemble true Siamese in appearance. They wear a loin-cloth falling to the knee after the Siamese fashion, and part their thick mop of hair down the middle. They have handsome faces and high foreheads, and are tattooed at the waist. Most of them live in Siam, but there are a few Yoon villages in our territory too, and Yoons are also found scattered through the Shan villages. They are industrious traders. A few may usually be seen in Keng Tung. Their houses are always clean, and often have little gardens in front of them.

Across the plain, two peaks of abrupt and striking outline rise in the south and west. Of these, the main peak of Chik-Tsong (4,336 feet) is in Siam. The frontier line passes over its lesser spur. The other peak is Hpa-Liang (5,263 feet), which, later on, is seen to be the centre of a great system of hills.

Hawng Luk is the last village of importance. But a series of smaller villages like Vying Chyau and Meh Kau are scattered along the road until the frontier is reached at Ta-Kyi-Lik. All this country is a succession of broad paddy plains, intersected with little belts of forest. But the forests are free from undergrowth, and are more like copses of big trees, amongst which teak and *Kanyin** are numerous. The villages are trim and well populated with Shans and Yoons. Plantain, papiya, and pomelo trees grow in most of the gardens. Long timber causeways have been built across the boggy approaches to some of the villages by charitable people—and I can think of no more meritorious act. For though the country is quite dry and hard in January, it is, as I have explained, nothing but a swamp when the paddy-fields are flooded in the Rains. These causeways are often only a foot or two high, but may be two or three hundred yards long. Near each, a board has been set up with a few words of dedication upon it. In Ta-Kyi-Lik itself, some charitable person has built a curious roofed bridge across a creek. There are living rooms on either side of this bridge, with the roadway passing down the middle. The dedication is written on a golden board.

Immense flocks of Cranes, the *Burmese Sarus*, collect at this season (January) in the dry paddy-land, where they glean the fallen grain. These great

* *Dipterocarpaceæ*.

birds are quite five feet high. I counted 92 of them in one bit of field alone near Hawng Luk. They play and dance all day, and fill the air with their cheerful clamour. They allow no one to approach nearer than a hundred yards. The Burmese call them '*Gyogyga*.' The Chinese, who call them '*Lau Kwan Waw*,' consider them sacred, and treat them with great respect. Chau Sheh Chwen says large numbers of them visit Yünnan in winter, returning home in the Rains to *Lau Kyin Shan*, the 'Mountains of the Gods,' where they are the companions of *Lau Tau Ts'su* and his buffalo. The Chinese believe that these celestial birds eat nothing but grass—and indeed, they are known to be very clean feeders. It is said that they are exactly paired off, male and female. In fact they are always seen in small groups—a father, mother, and two young ones, and their affection for each other is proverbial. A pathetic story is told of two Cranes who had mated for the season and whose domesticity was disturbed by the arrival of the former mate of the female. He was driven off, but the female showed every sign of distress, and eventually pined and died in her nest. The story is said to be true. The gigantic Cranes seen here are light grey, with scarlet heads and necks. The legs are pink, the beak dull yellow-green, and the eyes yellow.* Their slow,

* I noted at the time that the eyes are yellow. Finn says the eyes of the *Indian Sarus* are red. The *Burmese Sarus* is described as inhabiting the plains of Burma, and ranging east to Siam and Cochin China.

gliding flight is very graceful. The neck and legs are outstretched in flight, and the tips of the wings are then seen to be dark-grey. They spend the night on the ground in flocks, with sentries regularly posted.

Another extremely handsome Crane, the *Hooded Crane*, is also found near Ta-Kyi-Lik in January. The head, neck, and tail-tips of this bird are white. The rest of the body is dark brown, turning to rich ruddy-bronze on shoulders and wings. This is the same bird as the Japanese *Nabezuru*, and is altogether rare here. Finn says it is an Eastern Asiatic Crane, breeding in Eastern Siberia and wintering in China, Corea, and Japan. Hume reports dark Cranes with white heads and necks as far west as Manipur. Finn says they would be worth catching, being 'very rare in captivity.'

In the woods two birds must be specially mentioned as being commoner here than elsewhere. One is the *Large Racket-Tailed Doongo*, with his two long tail-quills floating behind him: the other is the *White-Crested Laughing Thrush*, a specialist in the art of hiding himself, and laughing at you from the middle of a thicket. This brown Babbler has a beautiful white crest. These Siamese birds have much more white on the breast than have other varieties.

The frontier village of Ta-Kyi-Lik lies beside the Nam Myeh Hsai river, which from here eastward to its junction with the Mekong is the boundary between Burma and Siam. In the opposite direction (westward),

the frontier leaves the river almost immediately, and follows the crest of the hill ranges south-west towards the lower, rounded spur of Chik-Tsong. The abrupt outline of Chik-Tsong dominates the whole scenery as you look across into Siam. The river is not deep here, and as I sat at breakfast near the ford, I saw several Yoons cross over to the little Shan village of Mai Hoon Khoon on the opposite bank. The population across the border continues to be Shan for a couple of days' journey, before Yoon villages become plentiful.

The northern extremity of Siam, with which we are concerned here, is divided into two provinces called Payab and Maharat. It will be seen from the map that these districts form a rough square with the Salween area making the western side, the Mekong area the eastern, and the Keng Tung State the northern.

Roughly in the middle of this hollow square is the large town of Chieng-mai, which has a population of 50,000 people.* Chieng-mai, which the Burmese call *Zimme*, is a big trade centre, and the most important town in northern Siam, so far as Keng Tung is concerned. It is the seat of a Viceroy (a prince of royal blood), and the residence of a British Consul. It is also the objective of the Northern Siamese Railway which is creeping up to it from Bangkok, and is already open as far as Nakawn Lampang. That is now probably our nearest railway station from Loimwe. The embankments and tunnels

* Map Square D.W.

have already reached Chieng-mai itself. This line is to the detriment of the old Burmese trade routes. Like the French railway to Yünnan Fu, it will draw away much of the trade which hitherto went to Burma, and which is being lost for lack of foresight.

The chief towns of the province of Payab are Chieng-mai and Chieng-rai. Those of the province of Maharat are Nakawn Lampang, Phre, and Nan.* All these towns are military centres of some importance. The Siamese Army, which is enlisted locally by conscription, is said to be in a most efficient state, both as regards training and equipment. It is well armed, and many of its officers have a European training.

From the border at Ta-Kyi-Lik, it is possible to proceed by jungle paths along the frontier, and so return *viâ* Murng Hsat† to Keng Tung and Loimwe. The distance of the round journey is about 236 miles. Few Europeans, other than Civil, Military, and Survey officers, can ever have used this route. January is the ideal month for the tour. Even by February, the summer haze begins to obliterate the beautiful hill scenery, and of course in the Rains such a journey is not to be thought of at all. We plunged into the jungle again, and emerged three days later at Murng Kwan. We were travelling along the length of the hills, so that we climbed ridges daily, followed them up and down along their extreme

* Map Square E.X.

† Map Square D.V.



A CHARMING CAMP AT MURNG KWAN RECALLED MEMORIES
OF KASHMIR.



ABOVE MURNG KOK THE PINE-CLAD HILLS WERE SILHOUETTED
AGAINST MIST, RANGE UPON RANGE.
(The Siamese Border.)

crests, and dived down again with aching knees and skinned toes, to some obscure jungle camp. These long ridges are often covered only with elephant grass, whose feathery heads stand out boldly against the sky. In such open places we could see the country all round and note how Chik-Tsong and Hpa-Liang lost their abrupt shapes. Indeed, they no longer looked like the same peaks. The Siamese border lies to the south along the last crest line, but falls further and further away until Loi Me-Sok (4,729 feet) heaves into sight.

There are a few villages here and there. The hill-sides round about had been cleared for cultivation. Kaw and Muhso villagers came to each camp to build us huts and stables, and to supply grass, wood, and water. They are cheery, manly folk. The appearance of men to provide your wants, even in the deepest jungle, is peculiar to the Keng Tung State and is typical of the excellence of Grose's arrangements. The Sawbwa also always provides a 'clerk,' who makes everything easy. I have never been so well treated, nor have I travelled in such complete comfort, in any other part of Burma or India.

Murng Kwan (an open bit of paddy plain) came as an immense relief after days of smothering jungle. Here, we crossed the Nam Myeh Hsai, whose valley we had followed from Ta-Kyi-Lik, and came to a truly charming camp under trees on the river's bank. The site is quite ideal, and recalled memories of similar camps in Kashmir. Some Shans were putting

up a water-mill a little lower down. Men and cattle crossed to and fro all day, for the river here is again placid and fordable. A hill covered with a stately grove of *Kanyin* trees stands immediately behind the camp. There is a small shrine on the hill. The tall straight trunks of these trees (which the Shans call *Mai-yang*), and their now leafless branches, stood finely etched against drifting clouds. There are hot sulphur springs at two places in the river bed. Below one of these is a pleasant spot for bathing, where the boiling spring water is comfortably cooled by river water.

Beyond Murng Kwan the gabled peaks of Loi Tum (6,257 feet) and Loi Hpa-Kan (6,064 feet) rise up in the south-west, and dominate everything. Chik-Tsong and Hpa-Liang have long since fallen behind. The Hkeun village of Murng Tum lies in a little plain at the foot of Loi Tum. Several deaths had occurred lately, and I noticed that a cotton thread (called in Burmese *Pa-yeik cho*) had been passed completely round the whole village to keep out evil influences.

The old monastery in this place is abandoned, and the once beautiful building is in complete decay. The beams still hung together somehow, but it required only a high wind to send the roof crashing down on to the beautiful images below. No effort is ever made in such cases to remove the images and save them from impending destruction.

Loi Tum makes a corner in the Siamese border-line, which turns abruptly to the south from this peak. From



THE FINEST VIEW OF THE NAM KOK RIVER IS FROM HIGH GROUND
NEAR MURNG HSAT.



THE NAM LIN RIVER : BETWEEN LOIMWE AND MURNG LIN.

Murng Tum to Pang Nai Mee-daw we crossed a high spur called Sam Soom (Three Peaks). All the paths in this country go straight up a hill and straight down the other side, without mercy to man or beast.

So we came to Murng Hsat, which is a much bigger plain than most of the others. Murng Hsat is a place of some importance, though its population is scattered about in a number of small villages. A market is held here every fifth day. We were even able to buy a little kerosene oil. The Nam Kok river, which we had crossed on our way in, flows through the Murng Hsat plain. It is quite a big stream, being 30 or 40 yards broad at this point. It is about 3 feet deep in winter, but has a firm, shingle bed. Its prettiest reaches can be seen from high ground near the camp.

In the evening a picturesque Chinese caravan passed through on its way from Keng Tung to Siam. Its equipment in arms and bandoliers was so perfect that I treated it with some suspicion, until its passports were found to be in order. Takaw * on the Salween river can be reached in 5 or 6 days from Murng Hsat, but I expect the road is abominable.

At Murng Hsat the path turns north towards Keng Tung, which is now only 7 days' journey distant. The mountains henceforth lay right across our line of march. Day after day we toiled across high ridges until we lost

* Map Square C.U.

all count of them. In one place, Namak, there are sulphur springs of quite special interest, rising in a blistered acre of swamp and stones. The place is surrounded by low hills. A dozen or more springs emit columns of steam. The whole area hisses with the noise of a thousand boiling kettles. Nevertheless, birds are quite at home in the swamp. The "Did-you-do-it?" takes steam baths. All the buffaloes of the village revel in this place, lying about on warm mud-banks, utterly heedless even of geysers. One geyser erupts for 74 seconds, throwing up boiling water to a height of 5 or 6 feet. It then subsides for 238 seconds, and erupts again. The waters of a pool are flung about constantly by upheavals of hissing gas. It really *did* seem as if the Chinese and Burmese were right in believing that a dragon lived underneath. At this particular vent, a bank of white sand had been thrown up. It appeared to me that every spring in the whole area boiled up a little more energetically whenever the geysers erupted.

All this boiling water flows away and forms a bigish stream. It is much too hot for bathing in until it has joined and mixed with the Nam Kok river. Both my Chinamen, Chau Sheh Chwen and Lau Syau, bathed there. They complained bitterly of irritation of the skin for two days afterwards.

None of the inhabitants of the Keng Tung State make any serious use of their numerous hot springs



THE KAWS OF NAMAK WERE PARTICULARLY WELL DRESSED.



ELEPHANT GRASS, WHOSE FEATHERY HEADS STOOD OUT BOLDLY
AGAINST THE SKY.
(The Siamese Border.)

though the Sawbwa, as I mentioned, bathes in one annually. The Chinese, however, use them frequently. In Teng-Yueh * they have built a regular bath-house over a spring there, with separate rooms for men, for women, and for cooking. The water in all these springs is hot enough for the boiling of rice. There are no such facilities in the Shan States, and one thinks regretfully of many a comfortable way-side bath in Japan.

The Kaws of Namak are particularly well dressed. Their clothes and haversacks are dark blue, with pretty embroidery at the edges. Their blue pugrees are quite peculiar, being bound so as to form a brim like a sailor's cap.

All the way from Namak to Wan Lu, a distance of three days' journey, the hills are covered with pine. This is the *Khasya* or three needle pine, which is found at 'Pine Copse' in Loimwe. Our marches were through exceedingly pretty country. Each day we halted in charming pine-encircled plains at Murng Kok, Murng To, or Wan Lu. Of these the plain at Murng Kok is the biggest. One or two *tats*, or pagodas, have been built on the near hills. From these places the view towards Loi Sung (Elephant Hill) is really beautiful in the evening, when the sun beats down along pine spurs, through gaps in the hills. Next morning as you climb again, you look back through the pines over an extensive panorama, worthy of the Kashmir Lolab itself.

* Map Square C.R.

The little plain is now overflowing with morning fog. Beyond again, pines are silhouetted against the mist, range upon range towards the uplands of Loi Sung. The hills below the pine trunks are now free from oppressive undergrowth. Green Imperial Pigeon pass over in flocks of 30 or 40. Twice we saw Hornbills, and heard their ugly cry and wheezy flight. In many many places we saw Black-Crested Yellow Bulbuls, Franklin's Wren Warblers, pretty brown Fan-Tail Flycatchers and splendid blue Burmese Whistling Thrushes. At Murng To, a charming little Tai village, the people said that a large herd of wild elephants had been there the night before. A few weeks later some of these elephants were trapped. The Siamese Sawbwa of Lampun provided the *Kheddah* establishment, and he and our Sawbwa went shares in the proceeds.

For four days more, the mountains heave up steeper and higher than ever to bar the way. White rhododendron grow here and there. There is a double range of hills to cross during the 17 mile march between Nam Ing and Murng Hkawn, which takes its final toll of broken backs and shaky knees. Enthusiasm for one last panorama of beautiful, tangled country is only raised with an effort. The very peaks have moved away from where they were. It is almost impossible to trace the road from Murng Hsat across the intervening ranges. Then follows a final toe-skinning descent towards the plains and flesh-pots of Keng Tung.



A CHINESE STALL IN KENG TUNG.



GENERAL VIEW OF THE KENG TUNG MARKET: MARKET DAY.
(Keng Tung—the Chinese quarter.)

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHINESE BORDER.

THERE is a considerable Chinese population in Keng Tung. The Chinese have a quarter of their own within the Gate called *Paktu Pa-Leng*, and outside it. The large majority of these Chinamen come from Ssu-mao * and the country round about. A good number belong to the provinces of Kwung Toong (Canton) and Kwung-Hsi. The small remainder are men of Teng-Yueh and Tali Fu.† The influence of the Chinese in Keng Tungf as I have mentioned, is very considerable. Numbers o, Chinese women hobble about the streets on their tiny deformed feet. And of course there is a large community of *Shan-Tayoks* (Shan-Chinese) in this neighbourhood—for here, as always, the Chinese practise ‘peaceful penetration’ with ever increasing success. *Shan-Tayok* women dress in blue, and wear turbans and aprons.

Chinese caravans reach Keng Tung almost daily in the dry season. Their baggage litters the whole street as they unload. Now and then a caravan is extremely well-found. The leading mules, which are specially big

* Map Square F.T.

† Map Squares C.R. and E.Q.

ones, are decorated with flags, bells, and balls of scarlet wool, and very often the leading muleteer beats a gong as he goes along. The men are spick and span in black clothes, leather waistcoats, and 'moon hats.' Such well-to-do merchants carry magazine rifles and neat bandoliers, and are further fortified with thermos flasks. But as a general rule there is not so much display and the muleteers wear common rough blue clothes, and large round hats. There are numbers of eating-shops in the Chinese quarter, where men from all parts of Yünnan take their meals at little tables.

Panthays, or Musselman Chinese, come here in considerable numbers from Yünnan or the Wa States. Many Panthays sought refuge in the Wa States after the Panthay rebellion of 1868. The Chinese are enterprising. They do good trade in hides and opium, and by speculating on the dollar. In fact, they have more than once 'broken the bank'; for the treasury is a small one, and unable to stand unexpected runs of telegraphic money-orders to the extent of thirty and forty thousand rupees. This speculation in the value of French, Mexican, and Chinese (Yuan Shi Kai) dollars only became extensive in 1915, and has some relation to the abnormal state of the silver market. The coins are carried in on mules. They are forwarded to Taunggyi and Lashio, and are sent thence to Rangoon, where I believe they are melted. In 1917 the trade in lead revived so suddenly that anxiety was felt lest Germans in Siam were buying it. However, it was found to be consigned to

French firms. So, no doubt, the Germans got it in the end after all—transport free. It is not uncommon to see 100 or 150 mule loads of lead pass through Keng Tung at one time. The lead is mined near Meng Lem* in China, where, I am told, its value is Rs. 25 for 175 lbs. The cost is enormously increased by the long mule journey across Keng Tung to Tang Aw,† where some of it, at least, is shipped down the Mekong to French Indo-China.

The Panthays sometimes take up grain and transport contracts for supplying the Military Police. The Chinese community is of course much increased in winter when caravans begin to arrive. Indeed, there are times when the Shans get quite nervous about the influx of Chinamen. There may perhaps occasionally be bad characters amongst *Chinese* traders. Since the revolution of 1916, local administration in Yunnan has relaxed: that is to say, it has altogether ceased except in the matter of tax-gathering. Petty raids into our borders by brigands are, of course, always remotely possible. Dacoities occur now and then, and sometimes in broad daylight within six miles of Keng Tung itself. Chinese ruffians arm themselves with a pair of knives called *Ko-lien*. These weapons are shaped like sickles, and are specially used for disemboweling. One is held in each hand. *Ko-lien* are extremely deadly. The mere possession of a sharpened pair is enough to stamp the owner as

* Map Square D.T.

† Map Square E.V.

dangerous. But, as a whole, the resident Chinese, and those who come for legitimate trade, are exceedingly well behaved, and are an asset in every way. Chinese caravans being armed, even afford a certain amount of protection to the roads.

At the end of the dry season (in March and April), when caravan owners are anxious to sell off their animals, Keng Tung is quite a good market for buying mules. I have bought many fine mules of over 12 hands, and under 8 years of age (which is the Government standard), for Rs. 130 or Rs. 140. In 1917 the prices were much higher, but this may have been due to the commandeering of mules for military operations in China. Fine upstanding beasts, fit in every way for gun mules, can be bought for Rs. 230. Small mules, such as we buy privately for our own use, cost only Rs. 80 or Rs. 100. I shall always remember with amusement and pleasure the numerous friendly contests I have had on behalf of Government with these cheery muleteers of Yünnan.

Thanks to the Chinese and their revolutions which breed impoverished refugees, Keng Tung is no mean market for curios. These are not obtainable on the spot, but may be acquired slowly through some watchful agent like my Chinese servant Chau Sheh Chwen, or Grose's man Lee Yin Ta. We all have one or two Chinese servants. With patience you can get embroidery, jade, cloisonné, daggers, enamel pipes, painted scrolls, opium lamps, ivory chop-sticks, cheap but attractive

crockery, and great, round Chinese spectacles, such as Owls wore in my nursery days. Indeed, my conscience smote me rather over the spectacles I bought. They belonged to an unfortunate refugee. They were real pebble, and rimless. He only asked me Rs. 20 for them. He had a gold pair for which he wanted Rs. 80, but I could not afford that, nor was I anxious to deprive his poor old eyes of them. Chinese muleteers often carry stones in their pockets which they press and squeeze as they go along, in order to develop their muscles.

I believe that Chinamen are numbered in other parts of the world. We have no such convenience here ; but when a name is absolutely beyond comprehension, we just seize on to the Surname (which is the first name) and put the word *lau*, or 'Old,' before it. *Chau Sheh Chwen* will answer equally well to *Lau Chau*, or 'Old Chau.' If he happened to be the sixth of his family he might also be called *Syau Lu*, or 'Little Sixth.' As a matter of fact his pet name at home is *Chau Yo*. All Chinamen are equally rich in names. Usually it is all they *have* got, poor, honest fellows.

I used to imagine that the Chinese were cold-blooded beasts, with inscrutable faces and no emotions. I think that that is the popular notion. But since associating closely with *Chau Yo* and other Chinamen for four years, I have found that they have kind hearts and devoted natures. I do not even find their faces

inscrutable now. They seem to me, in fact, very expressive. I can think of many little deeds which were kindly meant; and of attentions when I am sick—notably when Chau Yo wakes me up to ask how I am getting on! I could not for worlds have objected to the abominable scent he once bought me, when my Eau-de-Cologne ran short. I simply watered it secretly. It is worth making sacrifices for love like his.

For this man is a zealous guardian of my interests—even though he finished the plum-pudding I had visions of cold. But what of that, if he admits it? I am afraid you and I have stolen jam and apples. We were taught that it didn't matter much, provided you owned up.

None of the Chinamen I know intimately have their emotions very well under control. Tears flow easily when they are angry. Chau Yo's storm opens with deep gloom—thunder clouds, and a few heavy drops on his cheek. Then all at once he drops on his knees and *shikos*, and it all comes pouring out with heaving sobs:—“Maung Po My.....it (the Burman) abused me. He said ‘g-g-go ba-back to your beastly China’—and I can't bear it.”

“Of course not Chau Yo. How could I get on without you?”

He sobs and shakes his head hopelessly, to show that it is all over between us. I put an arm round him. I cannot help it, for his grief is real. This Chinaman has a heart. I think he would die for me.



SHAN-TAYOK WOMAN.



MUHISO WOMAN.

Keng Tung Types.

The Chinese of Yünnan call themselves *Han yen*, or 'Men of Han'—thereby claiming connection with the splendid Han Dynasty which ruled China from about 200 B.C. to 200 A.D. At that period they conquered Yünnan. Looking across the plains then, as you may do still, to where the clouds stood over the hills like great white domes, they called it *Yün : nan* : 'Land of the Southern Cloud.' The Pekinese dialect of those old warriors is retained still in Yünnanese, and the two languages are very similar, though divided from each other geographically by the whole breadth of China.

I have heard distinctions drawn as if the Yünnanese were not true Chinamen. But with reference to this I would quote Major Davies, who says:—"The process of absorption of other races by the Chinese has undoubtedly been going on all over China ever since the Chinese entered the country. Whatever the pure Chinamen may have been 5,000 years ago, it seems historically certain that the Chinaman of the present day has grown up out of a gradual welding into one empire of races who were in original occupation of the country which has grown into China.....The Chinese of Yünnan are not therefore necessarily less pure Chinamen than their compatriots of other provinces."

* * * * *

All is not well now in Yünnan. Any trader will tell you sadly that life and property are insecure. Government is weaker than in the old days, and there is no one

to restrain outlaws. Military expeditions sent from Yünnan Fu to restore order always fail miserably. Passports are hard to get, and ferries difficult to cross. We see before us the tragedy of China. This is the harvest of so many hopes. The Republic, which should have brought millennium, only produced more hopeless confusion than ever. Yünnan was foremost amongst those who pulled down the Yuan Shi Kai, thus playing into Japanese hands, and destroying China's only support. Had the Yuan Shi Kai succeeded in making himself autocratic Emperor, he might have restored order. Feeble Presidents or Regents in Peking cannot assert themselves at this distance. The Local Government in Yünnan Fu is selfish and helpless. The tragedy lies in this, that the people deserve so much better. They are thrifty, law-abiding, affectionate, filial, hard-working, manly, and amazingly honest. What higher qualities could possibly be desired?

I suppose the truth is that an ideal state can never be reached in this rotten old world of ours. At any rate, our own superb civilization, with its social problems, not to mention the refined suffering of its great wars, is very far from ideal. Whatever China has suffered, she never suffered as *we* do now.

The Northern border of Keng Tung marches with that of China for some way along the valley of the Nam Lam River.* No one knows very much about this part

* Map Square E.U.



HO KOANG PAGODA—THE SAWBWA'S SHRINE, KENG TUNG.



WAT PA LENG—THE CHINESE SHRINE, KENG TUNG.

of China. It is only a remote corner—so remote, indeed, that although Yünnan took a leading part in the Revolution of 1916, our news was mostly gathered from the Rangoon papers, and sometimes even from the *London Times*. Even the districts on our own side of the Chinese border, i.e., approximately along the 22nd parallel in the map, are only rarely visited. This attractive bit of country * is very pretty in places. It is dotted over with splendid monasteries. Prosperous villages stand each in the middle of their paddy plains. Peepal trees and Banyans, singly or in clumps, grow to a great size. I have already mentioned, on page 64, the curious rites practised here at Wan Nam Yu † and other villages—rites which are strangely reminiscent of the Buddhism of Tibet. In the monastery at Lawng San I found the swastica, gordion knot, and even a 'wheel of life.' Chinese influence is naturally strongest near the frontiers. It is most clearly noticeable in the monasteries, where stone 'Heavenly Dogs' stand in pairs on the steps. A round ball is always carved out loose in the mouth of one dog, after the Chinese fashion. The other dog of the pair always has his mouth shut. Hundreds of thousands of images of *Maha Kachai*, the Chinese God of Wealth, are packed upon the altars. A little oasis of pure Burmese influence occurs at Wan Sang (near Murng Lwe) where the Burmese language is treated as a sort of classic, being chanted

* Map Square D.U.

† Map Square D.U.

and copied, though the Shan monks know no word of it. Then, again, at Wan Nam-ying, the Lem Shans, though Buddhists, actually still offer a sacrifice of chickens to the old Gods of the Wild Wa. The Wa originally occupied all this country. Their old entrenched settlements are still found—as at Murng-Hkak, where now only a Godling, called Sau Hkam Hkyo (Lord Golden Green), occupies the tree-grown moats. Traces of the Wa exist in the names of villages, as in the case of Murng Nung (*Country of Clothes-wearing*), where, according to legend, the naked Wa were conquered and made to dress themselves. At this same village there is a lacquer image of unusual size. It is said to be of great antiquity, and is kept carefully locked up in a cage. I wonder how many—or rather how few—Europeans have ever been to some of these remote villages. White men are still regarded as curiosities. Yet even here one village has given Rs. 90 in War Charity, and another has given Rs. 102-12-6, affording its little quota of relief to an unknown soldier in an unknown land, who has fought in an unknown cause.

The present population of this northern corner of the Keng Tung State is very mixed. It includes Wa ; Tai Loi (who are of Wa origin, though now fervent converts to Buddhism) ; Muhso ; a few Palaung ; and all the five local kinds of Shans—Tai, Hkeun, Leur, Lao, and Lem. Of all these, the Lem Shans predominate, and extend across the border towards Meng Lem * in China.

* Map Square D.T.



THE WAT IN PAGODA AT KENG TUNG.
(Sombre tiles—an impressive sweep of over-lapping roofs.)



WAT PA LYEN PAGODA AT MUNG YANG.
(Shrine of Light in the forest.)

An endless amount of lore and legend is preserved here in the homely names of villages. Murng Ka derives its name from *Kǎ-lone*—a fabulous bird which died on the neighbouring mountain of Loi Ho-ka (*Hill Head Kǎ-lone*). Several places are named from the exploits of a legendary buffalo which grew up in the hope of expelling his fierce father. The place where his foot-print was found to be as big as his father's is called Nong Hwoi (*Lake of the Foot-print*): and the place where the young buffalo made a detour (*wawk*) and came face to face with his enemy, is called Nam Wawk.

Murng Yang,* is one of the largest centres in this district. The name means '*Country of Dribbling*.' According to the legend, the embryo Buddha passing this way was given a hot dish of curry, which caused him to dribble. The monastery at Murng Yang is one of the finest in the whole State. Though much decayed, its sweeping roofs, stately pillars, gorgeous doors, and crowded altars are still very handsome. It is called the Wat Pa Lyen (*Shrine of Light in the forest*) because the legendary elephant, which carried sacred books here from Bangkok during the night, arrived at this clearing in the jungle as day broke.

To the north of this, the frontier between Burma and Yünnan remains undefined approximately between the two crosses (X) marked in map squares D.T. and D.S. This is purely out of deference to the Head-hunting

* Map Square D.U.

Wa, who with poisoned arrows command the profound respect of both England and China, and will probably continue to do so to the end of the chapter !

The most important route from Keng Tung into China runs north to Murng Ma* and Murng La, where the frontier is reached on the fourth day out. At this particular point the boundary pillars leave the Nam Lam river for a little while, and bend south, so as to include a fertile little plain in favour of China. The pillars here stand in a charming glen with a pretty stream, the Nam Ma, running down it. The site has no natural features at all. But this spot has always been the recognised frontier, which was formerly marked by a pagoda. The ruins of this shrine still exist in the jungle. Now there is a pillar near by, with a broad arrow upon it.

From Murng La the route proceeds to Chieng Law† and Chieng Hung, and thence north-east to Ssu-mao,‡ a large military centre on the way to Yünnan Fu.§ Formerly we had a British Consul at Ssu-mao, but unfortunately he was withdrawn long ago.

Another important route into China from Keng Tung proceeds north-west *viâ* Murng Yang|| and Meng Lem¶ to Chen Lo.** Chen Lo is another military centre. It is sometimes called Chen Pien. It is the seat of an official

* Map Square D.U.

† Map Square E.U.

‡ Map Square F.T.

§ Map Square G.Q.

|| Map Square D.U.

¶ Map Square D.T.

** Map Square E.T.

called the *Ting*, who has about 200 Chinese soldiers and a couple of officers there. North-west of Chen Pien are Shang-meng-yin and Hsia-meng-yin, and a little to the north of them again is another military post of 30 rifles called Nam Chak. Formerly there were other posts at Chan-ma-paw near Shang-meng-yin, and at Nyo-hpi on the borders of Meng Lem. But they were withdrawn in 1916 on the outbreak of the revolt against Peking, when troops were urgently required up north to meet an army which the Yuan Shi Kai had sent into Ssu-ch'uan. It was largely owing to these withdrawals that brigands were encouraged to harass the country to such an extent that the number of Chinese caravans coming into Keng Tung was considerably reduced during the winter of 1916-17. Brigands, it is said, have grown so bold in places that they even set up toll-barriers on their own account, levying a tax of four annas on every mule that passes. There is, however, no such organized lawlessness within four or five days' journey of our border. In fact, affairs seem to get worse the nearer you get to the capital at Yünnan Fu.

In this corner of China* the population in the plains continues to be Shan. There are of course many Chinese also. The hills are inhabited by Lahu and Wa. The Wa are classified as Wild or Tame. The Wild variety as I mentioned before are head-hunters. They require heads annually for sacrifices to their *Nats*, without

* Map Square E.T.

being in the least particular whose they borrow. The Wild Wa country lies along the western border of this part of China.* Chinese troops operating there have come to grief more than once. They have now learnt by bitter experience to leave the Wild Wa alone. Even when large bodies of troops are sent down periodically from Ssu-mao to destroy opium crops, they do not usually venture to interfere with the poppies of the Wild Wa.

Nevertheless such a Chinese force *did* come into collision with the Wa in February 1917. It is uncertain whether they came to destroy poppies, or to disperse outlaws. We heard months before that stores were being collected for the troops, but it was said then that the soldiers would *not* interfere with the Wa. The Wa, however, began to murder traders. Several painted scrolls, or *hkwa-tieh*, which I had ordered from Teng-Yueh were lost in this way. The caravan which carried them was destroyed. Whatever the original intention of the Chinese force may have been, it certainly attacked the Wa, and came to serious grief at Hsi-mee-sha.† The Wa drew them into the hills, and when the Chinese ammunition was exhausted, came down upon them from all sides. That at least was the town-talk in Keng Tung—and we rely for information entirely on rumour.

* Map Square D.T.

† Map Square D.T. This place may be identical with Hsi-ming-shan.

Rumour, however, is not really as unreliable as you might suppose. It is often exaggerated, but there is always a grain of truth and fact at the bottom of it. Thus, when we heard that a reinforcement of 1,000 soldiers had reached Hsi-mee-sha under Hsio Tin, the former Jen Tai of Pu-erh Fu,* we knew at least that the expedition had received *some* relief. For the trade-routes of Keng Tung, like those of Leh and Peshawur on another frontier, are a great telephonic system, over which news travels vast distances from mouth to mouth with extraordinary rapidity. And Keng Tung is the central exchange.

The type of wild rumour which begins to fly about in March, concerning (say) 'Chinamen,' is, however, of quite a different sort. This kind of news is brought in by a messenger who has run scores of miles at top speed, but has unfortunately slept for a couple of days on arrival before delivering his message casually to somebody's old aunt. This of course leads to a slight delay. The news is usually to the effect that sixty Chinamen, or six hundred, are attacking *Wan Some-thing-or-other*, which is not on the map. For choice the message is written in *Hkeun*, arrives at 2 A.M., and is read in snatches of match light. Two feathers and a chilli are attached to denote extreme urgency. 'Immediate,' which is simply the last word in urgency, is expressed by feathers and charcoal. Personally, I think chillies

* Map Square F.S.

are much more suggestive. In any case, the writer never was attacked—but he *thought he might be*. The road to his remote village is rough. The hour when Mercury hangs liquid in the paling east is also the hour of extreme bad temper!! The tale is traced remorselessly back to its originator—who is found to be somebody's old mother, whose uncle heard of a man, who said he met a Kaw who saw a Chinaman a week ago. Probably no two men treat rumour in the same way. One finds himself possessed with a craving for telegraph forms. Another calmly sits on scares until they are dead. There is wisdom in both methods. One leads to distinction. The other to honest but inglorious obscurity. 'Panic-ing' is the surest road to success in Burma. But those who cry 'wolf' will surely bitterly regret it some day. A special phraseology has grown up with reference to jumpiness. Nervous men in ordinary Out-post residence are contemptuously said to be '*holding out*,' or '*hanging on*.' Theirs is a campaign of ghostly armies: phantom columns trailing away in the smoke of camp fires: mental mirages which evaporate in the sunrise.

Besides the movement at Hsi-mee-sha, quite another set of operations were undertaken against opium exactly at this same time at Mung La by Kaw Shu Shin, the principal Chinese official of Chieng-Hung.* We had no information of these movements, which were believed

* Map Square E.U.

at first to be conducted by Germans, and aimed directly against ourselves.

This naturally caused some anxiety until the concentration at Murng La* was known definitely to relate to Kaw Shu Shin. Kaw Shu Shin is an energetic enemy of opium. The combine against him, however, was formidable. His expedition, like the other at Hsi-mee-sha, met with repulse. He had to call urgently on Murng Se for reinforcements. Thus the two Chinese military operations which should have restored order in the winter of 1916-17 were, through failure, only the cause of still more disorder. It will be easily seen then, why bad characters continue to hover on our Chinese border, and why brigands boldly interfere with Chinese caravans.

The opium habit still flourishes in these parts. Much opium is traded on the quiet. But the cultivation of poppies is said to have decreased noticeably. The Chinese fine, and sometimes even execute, opium growers. They have certainly persevered in their efforts at suppression, in spite of all the disorder into which China has fallen. It seems doubtful, however, if opium is as injurious to the Chinese as to ourselves, or to the Shans, Kaws, and other local tribes who consume it. Practically all Chinese muleteers indulge. Yet it is noticeable how extraordinarily hardy and energetic they are. They live by incessant work, and it seems probable

* Map Square F.U.

that under such conditions opium, taken moderately, is only medicinal. It is very different with the Shans and others, who are utterly ruined as soon as they take to opium. I have seen a little Wa boy, aged ten, who was a confirmed smoker.

As time goes on, we are bound by treaty to co-operate with China in the suppression of opium. Few people who have not lived on these Burmese frontiers can realize what this is going to mean. Large communities earn their living solely by cultivating the poppy—though they are not necessarily consumers themselves. In fact, an opium producing centre like Murng Lwe prides itself that only one man uses the drug. Others are interested in the trade, which is profitable. A *viss** of opium, which costs Rs. 65 in Keng Tung, sells for Rs. 200 in Chieng-Hung,† only ten marches off in China. Others again are consumers, who scream and moan if their normal dose is delayed a few hours. Even in our 'lock up,' I have heard men cry out until opium had to be brought from hospital. When energetic suppression starts therefore, local authority will no longer be the friend of the people. It will be their violent enemy, to be resisted not only with every kind of trickery, but even by force. Fortunately, it is realized that progress must necessarily be gradual, and that special consideration must be

* 3½ lbs.

† Map Square E.U.

shown to those who in this generation grow opium as well as to those who consume it.

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A third, but now less important, route into China is one leading through Murng Yawng* and Chieng-Hung to Ssu-mao. This is the road taken by Garnier in 1867.

Of the country south of Ssu-mao he says: "The change in vegetation and in agriculture becomes more and more noticeable (from that of the Keng Tung State). Maize takes the place of rice in the higher hills. We found fields of peas, and orchards of plum, peach, and pear trees. The forests had disappeared nearly everywhere. Here and there are oak, and on the hill-tops clumps of pine. This country, so different to that (of Keng Tung and the Mekong) which we had been accustomed to, made us light-hearted. The work going on in the villages, the kind welcome of the people, warned us constantly that we were entering a civilized country. The thousand details of country life around us reminded us more than once of home."†

And of Ssu-mao‡ itself he says, "A great plain spread beneath us, and in the middle a town of red and white houses, with a fortification, and with irregular suburbs lying along two streams that wound over the plain. It was not without emotion that we welcomed this first Chinese Town."

* Map Square E.U.

† Garnier's *Voyage D'Exploration en Indo-Chine*, pages 424 and 426.

‡ Map Square F.T.

Yünnan possesses great mineral resources including copper, coal, gold, silver, iron, zinc, lead, and tin. The export of lead, as I have mentioned, has lately revived. The annual export of tin from the tin mines at Kochiu near Meng-tze amounts to about 7,000 tons. But Yünnan has no communications with the outer world, except the one railway which connects Yünnan Fu with the sea at Hanoi.* The railway from Burma will have serious obstacles to cross, and will certainly not be built for many years. The Yang-tze Kyang is too broken by rapids to be of any practical value; and the Hsi-chiang, or 'West River,' is only navigable for 800 miles above Canton. So Yünnan with all its natural wealth remains one of the poorest provinces of the Chinese Empire.

Yünnan Fu is mentioned by Marco Polo as being 'a very great and noble city.' It is described as follows in the Geographical Journal of June 1917:—

"Yünnan Fu, the provincial capital, stands at an elevation of 6,300 feet. In spite of the destruction of its suburbs during the Mohammedan rebellion, it has a population of 100,000 and the circuit of its wall is $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Most picturesquely situated on the shores of the K'unyang Lake, surrounded by mountains and wooded hills, it is the terminus of the French railway from Tongking and is 536 miles from the sea in that direction. The railway, which is the only one in the

* Map Square G. S.

province, touches but two small towns between the French frontier and Yünnan Fu and passes barren country. Enormous difficulties were experienced in its construction owing to physical and climatic conditions, and it has been estimated that, during the summer of 1905, deaths, fever, and desertion accounted for 40 per cent. of the native labour employed in the Namti Valley, the most southerly section. There is no great exaggeration in the saying that every sleeper in this valley represents a human life. The length of the railway actually in Yünnan is 296 miles ; it occupied eight years in building, at a cost of about eight million sterling. The Yünnan section was opened to traffic in 1910 and is remarkable for the engineering skill exhibited in its construction, although it is a source of constant anxiety and expense owing to the frequency of landslides and slips."

* * * * *

The problems of every section of the Keng Tung border rise to importance each in their own special season. The Chinese frontier is usually dormant until January when the roads are in good condition. Then Chinese dacoits come over and trouble Murng Yang and Murng Ma.* As a rule the Shans manage to protect themselves pretty well, and dacoit bands are often roughly handled before they can get back into China again. When the Shans arrest a man they call upon

* Map Square D.U.

him to 'shut his eyes,' which is their equivalent for 'hands up.' Chinese dacoits make their victims shut their eyes and cross their arms—crying out in Shan "*lap ta, kawt meur*" (shut eyes, cross arms).

As typical of the alarms and excursions of the Chinese border at this season, I will select an example from my diary for 1917 :—

Wan Loi, 18th March.* I received a message in Loimwe from Grose late last night to the effect that a band of Chinamen, reported to be 300 or 400 strong, and heavily armed, has entered British territory near Murng Yawng. The Sawbwa is alarmed, and has turned out 200 armed villagers to resist the Chinese. These levies arrived at Wan Loi within 26 hours of being warned. Each carries a gun of sorts, and a belt full of rice. They are commanded by Hpaya Lai and Sau Kawng Tai, the Sawbwa's son. I have brought a Movable Column to co-operate. Thanks to the energy of Maung Kyi Nyo, the Burman Head-quarters Magistrate, who beat Loimwe village for transport, we left an hour after receipt of news, at 10 o'clock at night. The column reached Keng Tung at 5 A.M. this morning where we picked up some Mounted Infantry. The march was continued with fresh Chinese transport at 3 P.M. We arrived here, at Wan Loi, at dusk, having covered 24 miles in 20 hours. We have shaken down for the night on dry paddy land where booths will be

* Map Square D.U.

put up for the men to-morrow. The first party of Chinese came into Wan Loi just before we did. They are 75 strong, and have 66 mules, 49 rifles, and 3 pistols. They are conveying 29 mules loaded with 60,000 Mexican dollars, which they will sell most profitably in Keng Tung. These traders are men of Isar and Lin-an-fu*—where obviously there are big concerns interested in this undertaking. The route taken from Lin-an-fu is an obscure one. The main road through Ssu-mao and Chieng-Hung was avoided, perhaps for fear of Chinese troops operating there. The hill path used was to the east of that. The convoy entered Keng Tung territory in its eastern extremity, crossing the Mekong, as the traders say, near where Chinese, French, and British territory meet.† I notice they took care not to enter Haut Laos, where the French are always suspicious of ‘*tricasserie Chinoise*.’ Being in possession of treasure, these people must necessarily be peaceable. Upon being met, they knelt down in the road at once, and gave up their arms to the Sawbwa’s levy. They were allowed to retain enough rifles to guard their treasure. It was only their unusual numbers which caused alarm; as well as stupid rumours (now a fortnight old) of a supposed attack upon us from this very quarter organized by Germans. As a rule, these merchants travel in much smaller bands. But this year they have to reckon with the disordered state of China. They may also have

* Map Square G.S.

† Map Square F. U.

armed themselves heavily for fear of Kaw Shu Shin, the Governor of Chieng-Hung, who as I have mentioned has been operating across their path towards Murng La.*

The arms which these traders carry are interesting. They are all fairly, modern magazine rifles. Some of them are formidable weapons. There will be food for serious reflection when the opium question becomes acute. There are six different patterns of rifles in their possession. We call the best kind the '*Canton Arsenal Rifle*,' because it is stamped with that mark in Chinese characters. Its magazine holds five rounds. The talk is that 7,000 of these rifles have recently been lost to the Chinese Government, presumably by desertions. There are ten of them here altogether. One is said to have been bought lately for 120 dollars. Half the barrel is protected with wood.

Next in order of excellence is a German Mauser, dated 1908, and marked '*Waffen-Fabrik*.' The magazine holds five rounds. There are about 15 of these with the convoy. Both the above are excellent weapons.

Another useful rifle is a '*Loewe Berlin*.' A fourth kind has a curved safety-catch. It also holds five rounds, but is otherwise inferior. It has Chinese letters upon it, but also the chrysanthemum, the Japanese Imperial crest. A fifth is marked '*J. G. Mod 71—84*.' It can be charged with nine cartridges, and is therefore

* Map Square F.U.

called by the Chinese ' *Chyo Shiang* ' (Nine Loader). The cartridges lie in a tube one behind the other in the wood-work of the fore-end, under the barrel. They are pushed back into the breech with a spring. A sixth kind, an antiquated old rifle, works on the same plan as the last except that the cartridges lie in the butt, and not in the fore-end.

The bolts are well oiled. But the grooving of the barrels is much damaged by neglect. All the bullets I saw are smaller and slimmer than our '303.

Wan Loi, 21st March. Other convoys are expected. We have awaited them three days. Wan Loi, where we are now camped in a shady spot, is one of the prettiest parts of the Keng Tung plain. It is well called ' The village of Hills,' for it lies to the east of the city, immediately below the high mountain barrier which encircles the plain. These hills are considered the gate of the plain. Many places round about are called ' *Paktu Murng*,' or ' Gate of the country '—as for example the Kaw village of *Kaw Paktu Murng*. There are some fine Peepal trees in the neighbourhood. Large numbers of bees have built their hives on the trunks. The Bohenia is in full bloom, and the sultry air laden with its scent. The Cotton trees are also in flower, and numbers of birds are attracted to the red blossoms. Cuckoos, Kootar-Ka, *Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw*, and the Hot-Weather Birds call all day long from the trees : and this evening I saw a magnificent Silver Pheasant, with his two sombre

females. The Sawbwa's army hunts doves and snippets. They nearly shot us two or three times during our evening walk.

There is a pagoda called Tat Tsawn Loi (Shrine of the Hill-top) on a hill above the village. It is of curious design, being shaped like a bell-tent. The same legend is told about it as concerning a gate in Keng Tung, namely, that the Sawbwa may never visit it. Here also a *Hpay*a, or Minister, was executed while building the shrine. As he was dying he said: "Let any Sawbwa perish who comes here."

Wan Loi, 22nd March. The remaining convoys came in late this evening, and were disarmed by lamp light. The total strength of all the parties is now found to be 246 men, with 178 rifles, and 175,000 dollars. If 100 dollars are taken to be worth Rs. 160, the value of the treasure is Rs. 2,80,000. I hear that telegraphic money-orders are already streaming in to Keng Tung from agents in Rangoon. Goodness only knows how we are going to meet them. We are now on quite friendly terms with the Chinamen, who readily appreciate our objecting to their arms. *With that *sang-froid* that never deserts a Celestial, one of them, to whom Grose offered a cigarette, took *the whole box* so gracefully, that it was impossible to object. In return he gave us some melon seeds and sugar-candy. Grose, who loathes sugar-candy, bitterly laments his cigarettes, and is now smoking all mine.

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A certain evasive courtliness is one of the Chinaman's strongest weapons. The other day a Karen missionary called Ba Tey wrote and made a complaint to the *Ting* of Chen Pien.* The *Ting* neatly evaded discussion by replying: "I am extremely grateful for your kind enquiries. Thank you, I am quite well again now."

Kaw Shu Shin, the 'Governor' of Chieng-Hung,† is quite a young man. His past, they say, is not above suspicion. But it is easy to understand the reason of his rapid rise to power. Last year, for example, we asked for the extradition of two dacoits from Murng Se, a large town in China, where, incidentally, Kaw Shu Shin has a garrison of troops. In fact, as I have mentioned, he actually procured reinforcements from there lately when in difficulty. But firm in the knowledge that neither Rangoon nor the Foreign Office had ever heard of Murng Se‡ in their lives, Kaw Shu Shin replied that, though his heart was lacerated about the dacoits, he had been unable to find any place in China called Murng Se.

* Map Square E.T.

† Map Square E.U.

‡ Map Square E.U.

CHAPTER XIII.

ARTS AND INDUSTRIES.

I REMEMBER reading once of a Viceroy who was on tour that he 'won all hearts.' The grovelling insincerity of such a statement troubled me. Human hearts are not so easily won, and love would not be worth having if they were. Moreover, there is usually sufficient torture from tight boots and collars to stifle needless sentiment at State functions. What struck me more than anything else about Lord Chelmsford's visit to Burma in 1916 was the obvious candour expressed on all sides. Burma is ripe for expansion. There is a spirit of revolt against age-long lethargy, and time-honoured shibboleths, which have hitherto hindered progress and thought. Several remunerative projects, such as roads and railways, are eagerly desired by people who think that expenditure of money would be the truest economy in the long run. There are other projects like Colleges, a University, and a High Court, which it is thought should receive attention immediately War-strain ceases. And when all this was poured forth upon the Viceroy, I remembered the wise words of our Keng Tung Sawbwa:—"The breast is only given to children who scream."

However, Lord Chelmsford was not to be drawn from the virtuous path of economy. "I should be untrue to you," he said, "and untrue to myself, if I held out rosy prospects of financial assistance when no such prospects existed. But believe me I shall leave Burma deeply impressed by her potentialities; and full of sympathy with her ambitions."

I thought there was a true note of sincerity on both sides in all this. I believe the future is full of hope. There are lots of things which can be done without money, and they *are being done*. The uprooting of old prejudices, the circulation of new ideas, cost nothing. It is obvious that when Sir Harcourt Butler assumed the Lieutenant-Governorship, Burma entered upon the 'New Way.' Hopeless pessimism has since then changed into healthy 'Public Opinion.' People are encouraged to express ideas. There is no doubt too that clever suggestions published in the papers are carefully read and made use of—and that is quite a new departure.

Here in remote Keng Tung, far from the pageantry of this Viceregal visit, I have only tried to imagine things which in truth are beyond imagination. The boat races on the moat at Mandalay, and upon the Royal Lakes at Rangoon, beneath the great golden dome of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, were riots of colour such as no other country in this world could display. Suffused sunshine beat through paper umbrellas upon the glowing silks

of thousands of men and dainty women. I saw it all in imagination. In Thibaw's grand old timber palace, the Viceroy met the people of Upper Burma. Picturesque Shan Chiefs, who had to be pulled down to Mandalay by force 30 years ago, now flashed about in motors, and went to Durbar, each to the booming of his own salute. Even the ex-Royal Family, and the Ministers of the late Burmese Government, were represented there. All that will be an ineffaceable memory for those who saw it.

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As for me, in my far-away post, I only read. But I read with growing interest, for I discovered that Burma was reviewing her arts, crafts, and industries, and that the information made available was such as no individual could collect for himself in a lifetime. I am not surprised that the Viceroy was 'impressed.' The 'Arts and Industries Exhibition,' which 40,000 people visited, the great Shan Camps, even the street pandals and garden parties, were all arranged so as to display some Burmese product or industry. Rice mills, oil drills, pumps, and all imaginable industries—from treatment of wolfram to the rolling of cheroots—were illustrated by running engines and actual demonstration.

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Of course Burma is an agricultural country. The true sources of her wealth at present are rice and timber.

War has depressed trade, but even in such an abnormal year as 1916 Burma exported 397,684 tons of rice to Europe ; 761,960 tons to India ; 471,892 tons to Japan, Java, and Australia ; and 71,378 tons to America. The total of these exports amounted to 1,702,914 tons. I hope Philistines who moan the old lament ' the Burmese are useless ' will put these figures in their pipes and smoke them reflectively.

Such achievement is partly due to Co-operative Societies which are largely under Burmese control. They are meant to save improvident villagers from falling into the hands of Indian *Chettis*. *Chettis* lend money at, say, 120 per cent. per annum. Under such conditions, a cultivator who has had a bad crop, or lost cattle, is soon driven from the land that bore him. It was to meet this deadly threat that ' Co-operation ' was started some years ago. In 1906 there were 21 Societies, with 1,400 members, and a capital of 24 lakhs. Now, in 1917, there are 2,250 Societies linked in groups. They have 51,000 members, and a capital of 107 lakhs. Land irrigated by canals in Upper Burma increased from 7,000 acres in 1902 to 270,000 acres in 1916. Cattle insurance was started in 1911. This was an important step, because it is the custom in Burma to leave cattle to wander about grazing all over the place. The temptation to steal them is irresistible. Stolen cattle are either disposed of as meat for the market, or else the owner pays a ransom. The ransomed animal is

forthwith let loose, and in time wanders home again. Such blackmail is called *Pyan pey* (give back).

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The Burmese of course are great smokers. Men and women habitually smoke cheroots, and so do even little children. Quite good cigarettes are made at Yawng-hwe. Here, in the Shan States, the tobacco is rather coarse. But I sometimes blend it with *Craven* for my pipe. Usually, however, I smoke a light dusty tobacco sent me by Ma Hla from Pakokku. I get my cheroots from Ma Shwe. Everyone has his own special *Ma* Somebody-or-other, and no doubt the blue curling smoke recalls pleasant memories of that charming and very business-like little lady.

About 90,000 acres of land are placed under tobacco every year. Nevertheless, from a half to one million pounds of tobacco are also imported annually. Tobacco is grown in almost every district, but Henzada and Thayetmyo are important centres. The most common type is a large-leaved plant which grows to a height of three or four feet. Recent silts and sandy loams deposited by floods make the most suitable soil. The lowest leaves and flowering shoots are plucked off, so that only eight or ten of the best leaves remain to mature. In April and May the crop is gathered, and yields from 200 to 400 *viss* of dried tobacco per acre. It sells at from Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 per 100 *viss*.*

* A *viss* is 3½ lb.

Ground-nuts are largely cultivated in the "Dry Zone" of Upper Burma. Amongst other things, I believe olive-oil and oil-cakes are made from them. Sugarcane, chillies, and various kinds of beans are also grown, and near Salin I used at one time, in the course of my duties, to buy very good wheat. In 1916-17 there were 212,000 acres under cotton. The total yield was estimated at 45,504 bales of 400 lb. each.

Teak is so far the best exploited timber, but a great many other kinds of wood are also valuable. The greatest *teak* forests are those of the Pegu Yomas, and those found in parts of the Shan States, along the Mekong and Salween Rivers. *Teak* for the use of the Navy comes from the Pegu Yomas, and is supplied free. *Ingyin* wood grows in most parts of Upper Burma. When stripped of sap wood, and properly seasoned, it is as good a timber as any for house-posts. This tree, by the way, has flourished in Burma for some millions of years. It is found fossilized all over Upper Burma. Trunks 15 and 16 feet long were used in their fossilized state as door beams in the Pagodas at Pāgān.* Fossilized *Ingyin* is still used for making railings and boundary pillars, and is crushed to make metalling for roads. Small bits, which have a peculiar ring, are even hung up and used as gongs.

The Para rubber-tree was only introduced experimentally at Mergui about 40 years ago. During the

* See my 'Pāgān' (Hanthawaddy Press, Rangoon).

last ten years serious attention has been paid to rubber cultivation. Rubber trees mature in four years in the Malay States, in five years in Ceylon, but not till six years in Burma.

Here, in these remote parts of the Shan States, the forests are hardly controlled at all yet. But the great *teak* forests of the Mekong Valley are now beginning to receive attention. The half-wild people who inhabit all the frontier hills cultivate on what is called the *Taung-ya* system. That is, they clear patches of jungle in rotation, never using the same ground more than once in six or seven years. This wasteful process naturally brings tears to Government's eyes. Unfortunately, there seems to be no remedy. The ground is so full of pests and insects that they destroy the crops, unless they themselves have already been destroyed by firing. It is for this reason that the hill people laboriously burn and clear fresh jungle each year.

Two pine-trees are commonly found in the hills. One is the three-needled *Pinus Khasya*, which grows at a height of from two to seven thousand feet. The Burmese call it *Thone-gwa tin-u*. We have, as I have mentioned already, a fine clump of them at 'Pine Copse' in Loimwe. I have protected them from the Kaws who cut these beautiful trees almost in half for the sake of a handful of pine-shavings. The pines of Kalaw are *Pinus Khasya*. Poor specimens there are now being taken out and made into matches in the Mandalay Match Factory.

The other pine is the two-needled *Pinus Merkusii* which is generally found below 3,000 feet. This is a much bigger tree. It grows to a height of 150 feet in the Salween Valley, where scattered *Merkusii* tower high above the *Ingyin* trees. No seedlings or young trees are found, and these gigantic pines have the appearance of being survivors of some ancient forest. *Deodar*, I think, is not found in Burma. Japanese *Cryptomeria*, planted experimentally in Taunggyi, are doing well.

I read the other day that the area of forest already under preservation in Burma is nearly half as much again as that of any other province in India, and exceeds one-fourth of the total area of reserved forests in the whole Indian Empire. The forest revenue in normal years exceeds one crore of rupees, or more than one-third of the total forest revenue in India.

* * * * *

Burma's extraordinary mineral wealth is still almost unexploited. The Bawdwin mines at Namtu are said even to rival the famous Broken Hill mines. They were worked by the Chinese from a remote age up till the outbreak of the Panthay rebellion in 1868. Then the Burmese worked them till 1906. Now they belong to the Burma Mines Company. The slag residues alone, left near the mines by ancient Chinese workers, proved exceedingly valuable. In all 182,200 tons of coarse and fine slag, containing 75,814 tons of lead and

705,352 ounces of silver, have been smelted and realized. The output of lead has increased three-fold since the War began, and that of silver ten-fold.

The War has also stimulated the output of wolfram which is found widely distributed in Tavoy, and in Mergui, Amherst, Thaton, and the Southern Shan States. Wolfram is a natural tungstate of iron and manganese. It is specially valuable because of its tungsten content. Metallic tungsten is extracted for the preparation of steel alloys used in the manufacture of high-speed cutting steel. The Germans realized the value of Burmese tungsten almost before we did. They are not likely to meddle with *that* again. In one week in December, 1916, 69 tons of wolfram were exported from Burma, as against only 55 tons in the corresponding week of 1915. Altogether 2,382 tons were exported in 1915 and 3,557 tons in 1916.

Coal found in the Chindwin and other parts of Upper Burma is of poor quality. The Burma Railways at one time burned 900 tons of Thingadaw coal monthly. But it had to be mixed with Bengal coal. Moreover, it disintegrates and deteriorates very rapidly; and after lying stacked for a few months is useless. So it was given up.

The most important oil-fields are of course those of Yenangyaung. But there are many others besides. The Burma Oil Company pumps its oil all the way from Upper Burma to Rangoon through a pipe-line. Petrol,

kerosene, petroleum, benzine, and thirty varieties of lubricating oils, are all produced in Burma, as well as laboratory products from benzine, aniline dyes, and so on.

The Burmese themselves have extracted oil for generations. The name of a big concern called the '*Twinza Company*' is derived from the words *Dwin*, a well : and *Sa*, to eat : i.e. 'Well Eaters,' or those who live by possessing oil wells. In Burmese times the right to dig for oil was vested in 24 heads of families, or *Twinza-yos*. After British annexation these rights were recognised in perpetuity, but a royalty was levied. One hundred and twenty wells acquired by King Mindon Min by his marriage with a member of a *Twinza-yo* family, as well as certain other wells, fell to the Crown. These are at present held on lease by the Burma Oil Company.*

The laborious methods originally employed by the Burmese in digging their wells are very interesting. Diggers went down with their eyes bandaged so that no time should be lost at the bottom in getting accustomed to the darkness. Even so, they were brought to the surface in a state of exhaustion. A man, practically naked, was lowered by a rope and pulley 250 feet in 15 seconds. After digging frantically for half a minute in an atmosphere of gas, he was hauled up again. The haulage took two minutes, and at least half an hour's rest had to be allowed before he was fit to descend once

* This note is taken from a memoir published in 1913 by the Geological Survey of India.

more. Light was reflected down the well by mirrors. Now-a-days Burmese diggers wear a sort of diving dress, and air is pumped down to them. The people who pump air, as well as those who let the digger down and pull him up again, are usually his own relatives. By such methods wells are now dug 400 feet deep in about two years, whereas with a modern drilling machine the same depth can be reached in a week.

The Burmese had a very ingenious way of breaking through hard sandstone strata when these were met. A lump of iron weighing about 150 lb. was suspended over the well by a rope passing over a bamboo. The well bottom was examined with a looking-glass, and the weight shifted until it hung exactly over the part to be struck. The rope was then smartly cut against the bamboo, and the weight released. In a well 256 feet deep, the momentum attained would be 19,200 foot-pounds, and the shock of impact could be felt at the surface for some distance round.*

Rubies and lapis-lazuli are found in the mines of Mogok. Topaz, tourmalines, amethysts, sapphires, and spinnels, are also procured in the province. Amber comes from the Hukong Valley.† Bits of amber containing prehistoric insects are often seen. Jade is dug in the Jade Mines of Mogaung.‡ Much of it is brought to Mandalay for cutting and polishing. Priceless stones

* *Times of India.*

† Map Square A. Q.

‡ Map Square A. Q.

can sometimes be seen in Mandalay, lying about the floor of humble sheds. They usually find their way to China. Green jade is said to have been discovered in Upper Burma by a Yünnanese trader, who happened to pick up a piece of stone to balance the load of his mule. When he got home he found that the stone which he had used as a weight was fine jade.

Silk weaving is one of the big industries, though, curiously enough, very little silk is produced in Burma. A section of the *Ze-gyo* Market in Mandalay glows with splendid coloured silks. The good taste of Burmese men and women is evident from the dainty shades of silk they wear, and from their skill in blending the colours in their dress. There is a silk-weaving Institute at Amarapura.

Kachins, Marus, Shans, and Karens, all have distinctive weaving industries of their own. Every hill-tribe makes bags, or haversacks, which are peculiarly their own. Whole chapters might be written about these bags. Here in Keng Tung, the Wa make netted string bags.

Glazed and unglazed pottery is made in many parts of the Shan States. The decorative tiles, shaped like *Nats*, dragons, and elephants, which are placed on monastery roofs in Keng Tung, are very superior. Glazed tiles and plaques of high quality were used throughout the middle ages in Burma for decorating Pagodas, and are now often dug up out of the ground.

Ivory is carved in Moulmein and Rangoon. Most of the ivory comes from the Shan States. It is softer

and more regular than Indian ivory, and therefore more suitable for carving.

Wood-carving is used chiefly for the decoration of monasteries and palaces, and upon the sterns of Irrawaddy boats. It is only employed to cover up the structure of buildings. Being purely ornamental, it has no structural qualities itself. Such carving illustrates historical and legendary stories, like the tales of *Wethandaya* and *Maha Zanika*. Foliage, animals, *Nats*, and richly dressed human figures, are carved with considerable grace and animation.* The same designs are used for decorating silver-ware.

A few skilful statuette-makers work in bronze and silver. Statuettes of a *Chin-lone* player, a man carrying a basket, or a Burmese girl smoking a cheroot, are sometimes most attractive. Quantities of highly decorated lacquer cups and boxes are made at Pāgān. The gold and black lacquer bowls of Keng Tung have a wide popularity.

I wonder what the Burmese thought of the Exhibition, and what attracted their attention most. It would be interesting to know. I once took a very simple Burman to Rangoon. He was immensely taken with trams and ocean-steamers and all that; but what impressed him more profoundly than anything else was *the camel in the Zoo*.

* A beautiful *Nat* figure is illustrated in "A Burmese Enchantment" opposite page 55.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN THE NEW WAY.

EASTERN people, when they wake to the realization of Western civilization, are beset with numerous dangers. The new force cannot be neglected, for it is an aggressive thing. To ignore it means extinction. To accept it means the uprooting of old ideals and the destruction of old safeguards. Revolutionary ideas run away with people. Their own civilization—the slow creation of centuries—is supposed to be barbarous. Eagerly casting it aside, they adopt new ideas wholly unsuited to their needs. With unbalanced mind they search for ideals which, in fact, are far beyond reach. They expect to satisfy their longing, but receive instead only new desire. They want perfection which is unattainable in this contrary world.

Now all these dangers lie in the path of Burma. Yet there is every hope that they may be safely avoided : because whatever it adopts, Burma marks with an impression peculiarly its own. New ideas though readily accepted are always regarded from a Burmese point of view, which means that the old safeguards are *not* cast away. They are merely developed to meet new needs. The great safeguard here is Buddhism—that splendid philosophy which is the

mainspring of national life in Burma, an abiding anchor in difficulty. It is not merely an obsolete system of wise sayings and apt tags which illuminate speech like the words of Saadi, but are utterly dead in deeds. Buddhism is the motive force of all action in this land. It has not, like so many religions, become a jumble of silly nonsense in the light of modern science, but on the contrary it is strengthened and beautified thereby. It will save the Burmese, one earnestly hopes, from some of the sorrow which follows in the wake of what we call 'prosperity.' The Old Way was the happiest. But the New Way is a necessity, if the nation is to survive. Therefore it cannot be ignored. But it brings abject poverty with its wealth, sorrow with its luxury, agony unspeakable with its desire—a great sum of evil, heaping up until it breaks forth in floods of '*Karma*,' such as we have witnessed in Europe since 1914.

Burma has its safeguard. If Buddhism continues to be a living truth, guiding each man and woman; if it does not become a hollow convention as other religions have done; if Burma adopts only what is essential, and retains all its own old ideals, the way may be less bitter. Burma should profit by the mistakes of others. Japan threw away her old barbarism, but discovered afterwards that it was really a true civilization. China has suffered unspeakable agony by adopting systems quite unsuited to her needs. India has fallen into the slough of shallow learning and catchword politics. But there is a still more useful lesson at home in Lower Burma

itself, where certain districts have received wealth and education without religion, and where lads with a shoddy European schooling despise the learning of their parents, while they themselves are utterly ignorant of their own Burmese language and literature. The result only shows the deplorable consequence of neglecting what the old *Phoongyis** taught. This is a matter for the Burmese to attend to, themselves. It is not our policy to interfere with religion. The religion, art, architecture, speech, titles, and dress of Burma are the development of an ancient past. They are of all others the most suitable for her needs. They cannot be abandoned without unhappy results. And there is no necessity to abandon them for other people's shoddy.

For example, let us take the case of speech and titles. There *are* Burmese who even crave to be called *Mr.*, like Bengali Babus. They fail to perceive that the ugly word went out of fashion with frock-coats and top-hats. They miss the cruel distinctions with which it is employed. *Mr.* is only used by Englishmen with icy formality to strangers or contemptuously to *put subordinates in their place.*

The Burmese have their own titles. Like most Burmese things, they are pleasing. It does not matter a scrap if foreigners misunderstand them. Children

* Monks.

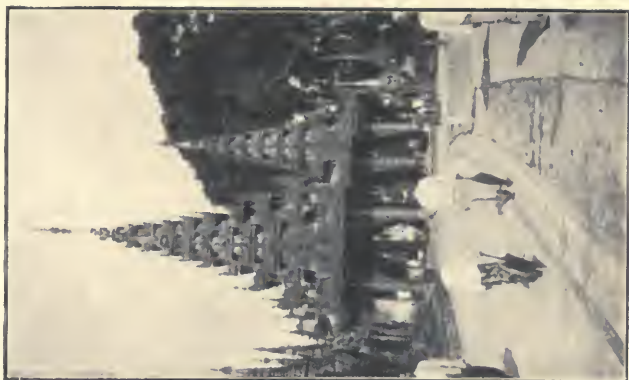
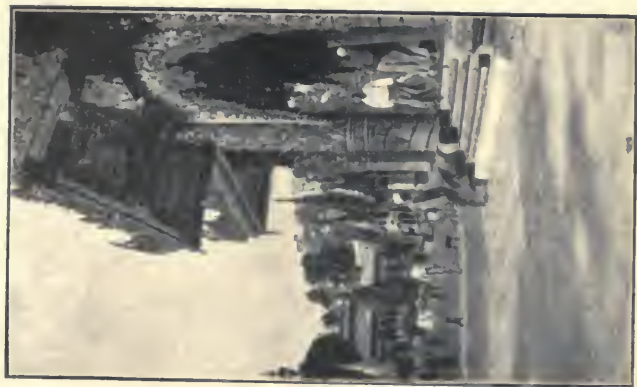
are called *Little Brother* (Maung Maung), *Big Brother* (Maung Gyi), or by some other affectionate or chaffing diminutive. Youths are called *Brother* (Maung), till they grow up to *Elder Brother* (Ko), or until they reach the mature dignity of *Uncle* (U), *Teacher* (Saya), or *Pagoda Founder* (Paya Tāgā).

Such are the dignified and affectionate titles which a few snobs in Lower Burma wish to replace with the *Mister* of an Indian Clerk, or a London Cabby. We have no such ambition in Upper Burma.

* * * * *

Impermanence, Sorrow, and Transiency—these are not mere catchwords. They are the basis of Buddhism. They are real living truths, adaptable to modern conditions. Firm in such knowledge, the Burmese expect no perfection in this life. They seek no permanence short of *Neikban*. Sorrow is ineradicable, having its roots deep down in the past. Craving, lust, anger, and aggression will bear their evil fruit now, as they did before. Modern Burma knows that, for it is after all only Old Burma re-incarnate. The truths which sustained it in the past sustain it now.

Therefore, progress is sane ; and we may expect it to continue so. We British lead the Burmese affectionately, as an elder brother leads a younger. On our side there is desire to give—and give quickly—all we can. On theirs there is trust. As elder brothers, we wish to shield them from what we know by bitter



SHWE DAGON PAGODA, RANGOON.

experience is harmful. We wish to keep their country for them, lest it be swamped out before they are strong enough to protect themselves. Burma requires more independence of India, from which it is racially and geographically as distinct as we British are ourselves. It is anxious to work out its own salvation in its own way, and is quite capable of doing so. There is no reason in the world why Burma should be exploited for the benefit of the rest of India. Decent Indians, and honest traders and labourers, as we meet them in India, are welcome. There is even plenty of room for them. But there is every objection to an ill-bred scum of discontented seditionists and mendicant loafers being allowed to over-run this fair province, and to pollute it with their low morals. That, without doubt, is what the Burmese themselves think. The Deputations that went to India in 1917 to meet Mr. Montagu petitioned that Indian emigration be so restricted as to leave Burma for the Burmese. They also asked for the entire separation of Burma from India. That is what the Burmese really desire, and that is their only serious political ambition. The whole thing was neatly summed up in an article of three lines signed by 'Ten Million Mongolians' who wrote:—"We don't want Home Rule. We don't want a Railway to India. We want to be a Crown Colony.

As self-respecting people the Burmese must learn to police themselves, and bear a still greater share

in administration. We desire to lead them to that. As manly people they must have still more Burmese regiments. We ourselves are directly responsible for neglect in these matters. But we see the mistake of it, and are rectifying it. Already Burmans have shed their blood in our cause. The names of their dead are inscribed upon our 'Roll of Honour.' Jemadar Bo Chan and Lance-Naik Maung Sein wear the Distinguished Service Medal for 'gallantry in action.' Nor shall we forget the services of Rifleman Maung Maung who fought for us in France, and who was an invaluable recruiting agent up to the time of his most regrettable death by drowning. People wonder that the Burmese have now shown military instinct. But those who know them have never doubted. There is the testimony of history for all who care to read the stories of Anawratta and Alaungpra. *We* formerly tried them only as irregulars, and tested them only at a time when we were *actually at war with them*, and yet marvelled that they failed us!

Captain Bushell, writing from Mesopotamia, thus records the first action of Burmese troops in modern warfare. "Our work was to follow up the infantry in an assault on the Turkish trenches, and to open communications to the captured lines as rapidly as possible. Lieutenant Stewart and Jemadar Maung Chan led 30 men over the parapet splendidly. The men dug out in the open, with shrapnel and bullets all round them. I felt as I watched them that my years in Burma

have not been wasted. I dare to say that no troops would have done better. Seven men were hit out of the thirty. Po Hla is, so far as I know, the first Burman to give his life in the great cause for which we are all fighting." Within a month Lance-Naik Maung Sein received the Indian Distinguished Service Medal for working his pontoon at the now historical Tigris crossing, till all his Burmese crew but one were killed or wounded. Such was the baptism of the Burmese Company of Queen Victoria's Own Sappers and Miners. Burmese Pioneers and Military Police were raised in 1916. The 'Burma Battalion,' which has since been renamed the '85th Burma Rifles,' and with which I have had the honour of serving, was raised in July 1917 for immediate service in Mesopotamia. The Burmese Military Police, while still recruits themselves, took over a Burmese Labour Corps, 1,100 strong, and knocked the rudiments of drill and discipline into them in a most creditable way. The Labour Corps went to France in 1917. The Pioneers developed into two Battalions of the 70th Burma Rifles. A Burmese Motor Corps went overseas. So the scheme expanded until by the end of 1917 five thousand Burmans were serving, not to mention a Jail Porter Corps, which will no doubt be the means of redeeming many a poor, passionate Burmese lad.

Burma is splendid soil for the cultivation of the 'Indian Army tradition.' As regulars, the men will receive (what irregulars cannot receive) *individual*

attention and sympathy from a sufficiently large staff of British Officers. In such conditions the old martial spirit, which unfortunately we ourselves have deliberately smothered for thirty years, will flourish again with deep understanding between officers and men. It is not true to say that the Burmese were tested once before and failed. Such trial as they received was no fair test at all, and was pre-doomed to failure.

For apart from the firmer discipline and closer intimacy of Regular Service, there arise sentiments which only those know, who can speak of '*my regiment.*' Sentiment is only the growth of generations. It is born of pride, hardship, and experience ; baptized with blood and sacrifice. It is service for honour, and *izzat*, and *aw-za*—not only for pay. So British and Sikh, Pathan, Punjabi Mahommedan, Dogra, and Gurkha, gather as their fathers did before them in the Service. That is the Indian Army tradition, and *that* is the only atmosphere in which Burmese or any one else can be expected to cultivate true soldierly qualities. There are already Burmans who have served in France and Mesopotamia who can recall how their forefathers followed Alaungpra to Siam.

One wishes that the old croakers in Burma who still nurse their foolish prejudices, who have so long done the Empire a dis-service by depriving our Armies of fine material, could see the 85th Burma Rifles at work in Mesopotamia. The time has come to cast aside the fiction that the Burmese are incapable of standing the

drudgery of soldiering. With enough British officers, and with the right ones, they are capable of anything. We have often handled far more delicate material in the Indian Army than these gay, independent, debonair people of Burma. The Burmese have now proved themselves in the fiercest ordeal of all. But Kachins, Karens, Yawyins, and even Marus and Lashis have also gone to Mesopotamia and await their turn. The Kachins, quiet, simple fellows though they usually are, have latent tempers which make them extremely formidable when they are angry. The Yawyins also are being watched out there with great interest. They have always been known on the Yünnanese frontier as a manly race, but they have hitherto stood aloof and rather beyond the reach of our influence. At least twelve of them serve with the 85th Burma Rifles. Of these two are Havildars, two are Naiks, and one is a Lance Naik. It is encouraging to note that a Kachin, Jemadar Sau Tu, and a Yawyin, Havildar Mi-tung Tang, respectively, won the Distinguished Service Medal and the Order of Merit, both for gallantry, before they ever went to Mesopotamia. A Yawyin, Naik Mi-tung Gam, is an expert instructor in Physical Training. To see this Yawyin, this Lolo from God knows what remote Chinese frontier, displaying his clean, shapely limbs like Nijinski in Mesopotamia, is really very wonderful. Stripped of their finery, nothing remains to all these people of Burma on the Tigris of their former picturesqueness, except their smile and their

cheery dispositions. They are down to bare essentials, when men prove themselves only by what they really are. We want another dozen Burmese Regiments and Kachin ones too.

But quite apart from Government employment of all sorts, there are plenty of other prospects for the Burmese. Higher education is required. It is not to teach them sedition, of which thank goodness there is no trace amongst such born gentlemen. Education is to fit them to exploit their own wealth—their mines, oil-fields, trade, and timber; and to open up the country with roads, canals, and other engineering works. All that requires *technical* knowledge. Technical and practical education is needed, which will not merely breed indolent discontent, but which, by the very fact of developing the country, will afford an outlet for the energy of its people. The possibilities are unlimited, and in the last few years the people appear to have become aware of their high destiny. There has been a marked revival, and a growth of healthy ambition. Burma is the largest province of our Indian Empire. Its forests are the most extensive and valuable. It is the richest undeveloped mineral area in the world. Yet its wealth is still chiefly agricultural! Its roads are practically non-existent. Its railways are wholly inadequate. Its population is hardly more than 12 millions. It is clear that money spent on communications, technical education, irrigation, and colonization will give quick returns. Burma, in fact, 'is a 'paying proposition.' It

only suffers from lethargy, neglect, poverty, and time-worn prejudices. We have heard much lately about the re-establishment of our own home finance after the war by means of remunerative works. The Suez Canal is quoted as an example of profitable State speculation. There is simply no end to the profit to be derived from developing Burma. The novel idea has taken strong hold that, if money cannot be provided by Imperial funds, it should be raised by loan, so that the progress of this the largest, the most loyal, literate, charming, philosophic, and broad-minded province of the Indian Empire should be no longer delayed for sordid considerations of ways and means. It is to this sort of development that we wish to lead our younger Burman brother.

There must be study and patience on both sides. The Burmese have to learn all about geology, engineering, forestry, and chemistry. They have to bring a University and High Courts into existence. They have to establish and extend the powers of their 'Archbishop' the *Thathana Baing*, lest Buddhism and the monks as a whole fall into disrepute for lack of control. They have to learn too, how inestimably valuable their old lore and literature is, and they must retain everything good that they have evolved.

Our own task is to study the Burmese mind, and understand its working. We must show Burma how to select only good things, how to combine modern education with the invaluable grounding of monastic schools,

and how to remember that reverence for Buddhas, priests, parents, and teachers is taught in the *Anandaw Ananda nga ba*.^{*} In all this we need not wait till 'after the war.' It costs nothing—in money! We need to develop affection and sympathy. Fortunately we have them already, but there is a tendency to drift away. Everything now makes so heartlessly for routine. There is no time for leisurely intercourse. There are haunting arrears, which may easily pile up into fifty cubic feet of files. Office work dawn, noon, and after dinner, makes machines of men, and machines cannot be expected to have sympathy and understanding. Routine has a dulling effect, and it will take forceful men to free us from our own red-tape.

The machinery of a modern State tends, not to rapid and elastic efficiency, but to a merely theoretical perfection, arrived at by a mass of forms and figures, and by returns submitted daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, and annually. In theory the system is excellent. Its practical effect is to kill initiative with rules and corrections, and to progressively curtail individual authority, concentrating it instead in a heartless, brainless, gutless mechanism of Babuism. Dynasties may totter, but petty officials, who are the most tyrannical of all autocrats, remain. If you doubt it, just try and draw your legitimate pay in

^{*} The prayer called the *Anandaw Ananda* will be found translated on page 211 of "*A Burmese Enchantment*."

Rangoon. A Beast with back-hair meets you with a book and unanswerable objections. He only knows what to 'cut' you, never what to give you. "Refer," he says, "apply, write, point out to Local Government"—but payment across the counter to meet your hotel bill—*never*. And so it is with other things too. Have you ever tried to condemn a shovel? It requires a mule-load of ink and paper to do it. It will take a Hercules to cut away the throttling tentacles of Babuism. The only cure is to reduce everybody's clerical establishments by 95 per cent. Truly, if every executive officer died in the night, the administration would carry on quite happily next morning. But if every Babu died, the whole Empire would totter to the ground. This, however, is a digression.

* * * * *

Than-tha-ya ma hlwey tha pyit thee. The Burmese words mean "Reincarnation is unavoidable." Here is a force we must not overlook when assuming the Burmese point of view. For of all other Burmese beliefs, this one of transmigration is the most widely held. The thought of rebirth, with all the influences for good and evil acting upon it, is positively the basis of Buddhism, and has a closer connection with the material development of the province than might be supposed. It explains so much that is otherwise incomprehensible. Rebirth is the vehicle of sorrow. By means of it, the cycle of existence is carried down the ages. For when we say that 'New Burma is only Old Burma re-incarnate' it

is meant in the most literal sense. It is no figure of speech. The idea of individuality has no part or place in this, for the elements that make a man, fall apart at death. They unite again in fresh combinations at rebirth—following certain laws of attraction.* A man therefore, according to Buddhist reasoning, is not an individual being at all. He is a product of actions, the fruit of forgotten thoughts and deeds. When you come to think of it, this must be so. For with the exercise of thought, and as a result of actions, we change visibly almost every hour. Our motives and our ideals alter so greatly that the old self literally seems to belong to another life. The thought comes—is reincarnation only the sequence of death—or are we *being reincarnated hourly*? The phases of life are so numerous, that the past, even yesterday, seems to belong to another world.

The idea of *non-individuality*, when rightly understood, is perfectly satisfying. In the West we cling to the belief of an individual self, but with examination it is found to be a narrow, selfish idea. Non-individuality, that is, ceaseless dissolution and combination of our substance, brings us into close sympathy with all humanity and with the great forces of Nature working around us. It widens our responsibilities. We are the heirs of all the future. It associates each man with the whole Universe, giving him a real interest in its welfare.

* See "*A Burmese Enchantment*," page 36.



THE PAGODA.



BURMESE SUNSHINE.

It forges a link between us and the animals, with the forests and hills, and with seas and clouds. All these things without any exception are slowly disintegrating and combining hour by hour in accordance with universal laws—clouds to the sea, rock to haze, earth to leaves, empires to broken pottery, and man to dust. Nature is a process of ceaseless destruction, and of re-creation out of ruin. *Than-tha-ya ma hlwey tha pyit thee*—‘Reincarnation is unavoidable.’

Out of all this have arisen three cardinal truths, which the Burmese call the *Leik-hka-na thone ba*. Impermanence, ‘all is impermanent’: Transiency, ‘all is transient’: Sorrow, ‘all is full of pain.’ *A-neik-sa: Dhokha: A-nat-ta*. A quick escape from the Wheel of Sorrow would be good. But sudden, causeless emancipation is contrary to the logic of evolution and science. Lust, craving, and weakness remain in us, and obviously unfit us for perfection. Craving, so the Buddha taught, is the direct cause of rebirth. When craving is extinct, when a condition of complete spiritual tranquillity is reached, when there remains no taint or element of evil—then the good, no matter of what faith, cross into the utter peace of *Neikban*. It is an ideal. Yet how many men, and how many more sweet women, appear to be almost on the threshold? To them *Neikban* will be satisfaction. It will contain in its substance all they loved. The Beloved in it will be mixed with their Beloved beyond possibility of fault or tears.

This is the mystery which broods benignly over Burma, a safeguard and a great truth. From stand-points such as these the Burmese regard all worldly things. These abstract sentiments have a closer relation to successful modern development than we think. Religion is practised daily in Upper Burma, not merely once a week. That is why it is the great safeguard. When Buddhism is neglected we get—*Lower Burma*. Who would wish our real Burma to develop into hooligan Lower Burma?

The fruit of these abstractions is solid common sense. With clearer vision than India, Burma has grasped the fact that her interests are identical with ours; that her civilization is dependent on ours; that both can only develop together. And so the Burmese have given blood and treasure in our great common cause. They have up to date invested two and two-thirds crores of rupees in War Loans. The province has sent 53 steamers, 43 launches, 20 flats, 60 cargo boats, and 4 dredgers to the Tigris, as well as much railway material and wolfram, and many men. The Burmese have *given* no less than 29 lakhs to our sick and wounded, besides 18½ lakhs to other war charities. Nor have they chosen the present crisis in our affairs to press selfish claims. *Let us not forget this point.* They are true brothers and partners with us in our great inheritance of Empire. It is a great inheritance, and one well worth fighting and dying for. Never did people inherit more since the days of Rome. India has made great sacrifices

too, yet with peculiar inconsistency, chooses to stand politically aloof.

But Burma is not India and has no sympathy with it at all. The Burmese look to us confidently as brothers, with honest affection. Here our humanity, forbearance, and sympathy have borne royal fruit in real Comradeship. We go forward together into our renewed and vital inheritance confidently. Working sympathetically in the cause of Empire, we shall together achieve great things.

CHAPTER XV.

YAUK-CHYA MEIN-MA.

(The Affairs of Men and Women.)

Ma Hla.

THE Burman is indisputably master of his own home. This is not because he is any better than his wife, but because in material affairs she is not his rival. She has the wit to take the lead if she wants to, and she also possesses all the necessary initiative, manner and breeding. She manages her man effectively in domestic affairs. But no influence is exerted further, simply because there is (happily) no such thing as sex-war in Burma. Before everything else, the Burmese woman is feminine. The conditions of her life permit her to indulge her womanly instincts. Her extraordinary freedom does not tempt her to rebel. Matters of marketing, economy, dress, and children absorb her energy. The real secret of her charm is that she is so intensely feminine. To this quality she often adds a pretty face and figure, vivacity, and extremely good taste in dress—a taste which she can usually indulge by clothing herself in light, harmonious silks. A pink scarf floats about her shoulders, flowers are twined round her dark knot of hair. The sunshine beats down upon her through her pretty paper umbrella.

There is no more dainty, demure little person in the world than this Burmese girl, ascending the pagoda steps.

All this comes to me as a memory. I can write of it in a detached spirit, without giving undue consideration to a charming exterior. After all, a pretty face is not the first essential in a woman. Ma Hla is very far away now. It is the inner depth of her nature, as revealed in letters to her husband Maung Po Myit, that pleases me much more than the vision of her before a pagoda altar.

To begin with, Ma Hla was angry. She was sure we had forgotten her, and what did her husband mean by going to the ends of the earth, to Loimwe? For this rebelliousness she was duly sat upon, both by Maung Po Myit and myself, and the following letter shows her in chastened mood. It is addressed, of course, to Maung Po Myit, not to me. I wish it *was* written to me, for her letter not only possesses literary merit, but betrays a womanliness which I find very attractive.

"I write to you, dear," she says. "Because of your good wishes I am well. In the same way I also send special good wishes for you to be well. The matter is this:—I reply immediately upon receiving the money you sent me. I did not post last week, but that was not from forgetfulness, dear. Don't be vexed."

"I earnestly pray to the Lord Buddha for all to be well. I send you my love constantly, dear. Do not be vexed if you do not hear from me weekly. In future I will write regularly. I have sent you the *loongyi* you

asked for.* Your mother and all your people are well. Don't be worried about anything on my account. I always live in the thought of our Lord Buddha. All benefits come from Him."

"Anger is amongst the four evils. It is an enemy. Therefore, my dear, put aside your anger. Please read this letter carefully."

"I do not forget the *Thekin's* kindness for a single day. It is beyond compare. I pray earnestly that he may be great, that his royal life may be long, that evil may be far from him. Please tell him so."

"I also think of your special kindness, dear. Be patient of any wrong I did you with my words. I am faithful to you always, brother, I think of the direction in which you are, and I bow down every day towards you and pray. Be patient, dear. I am very afraid of your anger. All my life long, and until death, I want to live with you without anger. I am full of anxiety."

Yes, I envy Maung Po Myit his letter.

A Matter of Moment.

The question of rebirth is naturally of interest to a Burman. The subject is more important than you might suppose. Consider! As a Burman you might be reborn either in Lower or in Upper Burma. In Upper Burma, which became British territory only

* This *loongyi*, or silk skirt, by the way, cost more than half the money which he had sent her!

recently, you would have a sort of Archbishop called the *Thathana Baing* to look after you. You would not have this blessing in Lower Burma. On the other hand, you could drink beer by coming into the world south of Toungoo, whereas by being born north of it it would be criminal *even to possess a bottle*. The risk of it all is too awful to contemplate. And the injustice!! Why, your punishment for merely possessing a bottle of Bass, would be *more severe* than for getting gloriously drunk on it!

The Friend of Man.

This is a Shan story. The Dog, they say, desired to have a friend. First he made friends with the Elephant, but the Elephant objected to his barking, saying that it would attract the Tiger. So the Dog left the Elephant and went to the Tiger. The Tiger also objected to barking, saying that it would attract Man. So then the Dog went to Man and has remained his devoted friend ever since, for when he barked Man only said :—" *Seek him ! Seek him !* "

Salim.

There's a dog I know who searches for a Master who is gone :
 For the Master who was all he loved, for whom he lived alone.
 'Tis a lonely, weary watching, and the searching is in vain :
 And the spark of expectation dies again and yet again.
 Ah, the nameless tribulation ! Ah, the broken-hearted mean !
 There's no pleasure in the sunshine, no delight in any bone.
 Was this why the Master lingered, whispered something in his ear ?
 Was this why he stopped to fondle, strove to brush away a tear ?

* * * * *

That was why. Ah, loyal Comrade ! I have shared in your distress.
 Dearest friend, my soul is yearning for the touch of your caress.

A Boon and a Blessing.

The remote frontiers of Burma are inhabited by wild tribes. Some benevolent person or other usually makes it his business to cultivate them. To such pious enterprise a Financial Commissioner once put his hand. His benevolence took the form of ploughs—iron ploughs which tilled deep, and brought prosperity. The ploughs were issued with careful instructions, and they really did dig deep : so deep, in fact, that they turned up the subsoil too, and the wild tribes were soon quite disgusted with them. District officers, whose very lives depended on the success of the enterprise, coaxed and swore in vain. The Financial Commissioner, they threatened, would be very angry, and when enraged his flashing eye would consume those obstinate men. Only the Commissioner's monocle that he mercifully wore, enabled people to live before him.

Unfortunately, wild tribes cannot abide iron ploughs. So at last the Financial Commissioner himself came to reason with them. He told the assembly how good the ploughs were, how it pained him to see their foolishness, how his heart longed to give them this inestimable blessing. In his emotion he lent towards them, and *dropped his glass*.

With a howl of terror the tribesmen scattered to the forest, and were never seen again.

All is not Gold that Glitters.

When the papers say that " Lord and Lady X won all hearts," I suppose they are only gushing. But

Editors don't know everything. They take their seats at the pageant with no thought for to-morrow morning's Viceregal breakfast kidneys which, in fact, have filled more files than all the pandals and red carpets.

Take, for instance, the case of milk. Nothing is so necessary to State Visits as good, foamy milk, full of cream and so on. There was a large file relating to the particular quart I have in mind. It was to be delivered several months hence at a little river-side village where the steamer would touch at tea-time. Some say the correspondence started before the cow was born. But she was a placid old beast, and didn't mind *that* a bit, until the milkman put on his apron. Then she shied, and kicked the bucket over. The whole credit of the apron belongs to the Sanitary Commissioner, who has made a special study of the art of milking. But apparently he did not know this old cow, and how irreconcilable the apron made her. Her panic only increased with rehearsals. There were sterilizers, and boilers, and strainers too, including a bit of an old shirt. But these were kept beyond reach of her apprehensive glances. At the last moment, when everything was ready, a frantic order came to buy the milkman *rubber gloves*. Rubber gloves in a Burmese river-side village!! They were simply not to be had—not for all the wealth of Thibaw, if he ever had any.

Well, anyway, the gloves *had* to be got; and in the nick of time they *were* got, just as the Government

Steamer, a dream of gleaming white paint, appeared in the bend. She approached. She came abreast. She swept on. Without a stop, regardless of programmes, heedless even of that sacred and bulky file, she was gone—and it is said the cow, the milkman, and also a Deputy Commissioner in blue suit and a Homburg, fainted away together.

Carlo.

I believe that some sort of understanding can be struck even with wild animals by studying them. You must know them, and you must be really and truly harmless. It is said that cows distinguish between those who eat beef and those who do not, fearing the one and not the other. Birds certainly seem to know by instinct those who will not harm them. One recalls the Sparrow-Kings of Hyde Park and the Tuileries. It is told of many a Buddhist hermit that even tigers will not hurt him. The Oorial of Mahommedan Kashmir, who take fright at a wind-blown scent, gaze at you as placidly as park deer in the Buddhist sanctuary of Himis in Western Tibet. I call to mind the fearless calm of snakes in Indian and Japanese shrines, where they are fed and left in peace, and I remember the docility of certain monkeys on Jacko in Simla to their hermit, although they had almost chased *me* to death. The marmots, which are so shy in the Himalayas, are as tame as rabbits in 'reserves' on the Rockies, where also I have seen bears almost (but not quite) as fearless as Carlo and Barlo.



THE DEVIL A SAINT WOULD BE.

(Carlo.)



THE DEVIL A SAINT WAS HE.

We need only consider Carlo here, for Barlo was eaten up early in life. Some months ago they were both brought in to Loimwe by Kaws—two tiny little black bears, in wicker baskets, such as are used here for carrying tomatoes. They were only four or five days old. Lying there helpless, with their paws clasped in a sort of *shiko*, as if claiming some dim association out of the past, they seemed to appeal with all the light of their bright little eyes to be saved from the misery and torment of captivity in the village. So I bought them both for a rupee, and became the reluctant owner of two bears. I gave them a tree, and dug a trench round it. In time the trench became a regular fortification, fitted with all sorts of contrivances to keep the captives in. But they always got out and laid siege to the pantry, where the milk is kept. Henceforth, they were completely free—two little black gods, worshipped by the household. They could be good as gold, and naughty as devils : yet were always fascinating, as they walked about on their hind legs, clamouring for milk. Then one night something swooped—and Barlo was no more, and Carlo, afraid now to live alone in the box near the tree, took up his abode on a cabin-trunk in the boot-room. As he grew, the jungle began to call him away. Yet he always returned. Sometimes he came back in the middle of the night, when a crash of crockery in the pantry announced his arrival. There he stood, blinking at my lamp with paws defiantly raised, and reeking of spilt Worcester Sauce, till I wiped him clean, showed him

the boot-room, and gave him some milk. Bears in the Rockies frequent outhouses almost as fearlessly as dogs, but I never saw one so entirely friendly as Carlo. Carlo was a Himalayan bear. He had a ruffle, and a white V on his chest, and he also happened to have a white imperial. There was a Shan in Loimwe who had a captive Sloth Bear, which came from the Mekong valley.

All this was in May. By October, Carlo was too big for the boot-room. He was expelled to the wood-shed, which became his base for raids into the house. He now followed like a dog, or romped on the lawn : where also he often lay sucking his paw, making a curious purring noise the while. Sometimes he was away in the jungle for ten days at a time, but only returned more friendly and more clamorously thirsty for milk than ever. He was utterly happy, so long as his liberty was sure ; but he tore miserably at anything that imprisoned him. How different it would have been down in the village ! Either his chain or his brave little spirit would have broken long ago.

At seven months he took to sleeping in a big tree near the house, where he sucked his paw perpetually. The Burmese believed that he got some sort of nourishment from it. The noise he made at night by this vigorous sucking sounded like the boiling of a kettle. It was only at this age that he became really playful. Every evening he rushed about after Maung Po Myit, or Maung Hkin, prancing on his hind legs, and swarming up and

down trees in an extraordinary way. But his nights were not spent blamelessly. He became an expert chicken thief. He raided boldly, and was quite unabashed when caught in the act. The revenge that inevitably follows such performances could not long be evaded. A dark night—a cut with a *dhar*—and ‘ somebody laughed and ran.’

NAUK KA YEA ZET.

Both of us come from the great *Unknown*,
You and I, my brother :
Out of the Past by *Karma* thrown
Man and beast together.

Brother ! I’ve paid you the debt I owe—
Kindness, for kindness of long ago.

Maxims and Manners.

“ The way of an eagle in the air ; the way of a serpent upon a rock ; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea : and the way of a man with a maid.”*

A deceitful man looks everywhere for trickery. He cannot understand truth. Unreasonable men seek for reasons, yet do not heed them. They question without desiring a reply. They form opinions without weighing facts. Their enquiry is void because their minds were made before they began. All men fear such fellows, hate them, and bear with them. But one day they take revenge. The bully fawns to his superiors, but treats those beneath him as dogs. He sacrifices them

* Proverbs 30. 19.

willingly to save his own skin. Beware of him. When he throws mud at you some is sure to stick. If you are over him, never spare him. Remember the poor devils he afflicts. If you are below him, clear out. He is dangerous, and life is too short.

Consider the words of Saadi:—"Who advises a conceited man stands in need of advice himself." Have good reason for everything you do. Explain yourself to a clever man, but never to a fool. He will wilfully misunderstand. Seek reason in the actions of others. There always are reasons, if only stupid ones. Learn wisdom from other people's indiscretion. Do not argue men out of their opinion. It is theirs, not yours. Seek the opinions of all, but finally follow only your own.

A heavy hand makes discipline. But so does cheery kindness. Men work for a brute. They work better for a good fellow. Harshness crushes opposition, but it also kills initiative. If you wish men to take the initiative—then give them authority first.

Sarcasm is a poor weapon. It does not pierce thick skins, but on the other hand it quite spoils sensitive men. Encourage timid men kindly. Ill-treated, they are rabbits. Well-treated, they are lions.

In testing men seek what they know and do, rather than what they don't know and don't do. Commonsense is better than a book full of regulations. The soundest logic is success.

Great men do not mount pedestals, but they are put there by smaller men. Good men excuse evil in others. Evil men never do. Clever men bear with fools. Only fools are intolerant. The last man to recognise a fool is the fool himself. A broad mind sees every view. God only knows what view a narrow mind will take.

No man with a sense of humour is poor. The richest is abject without it. The kindest men are devils in the dawn. Make your request *after* breakfast.

The only balm for grief is work. The best cure for worry is a walk. The swiftest remedy for anger is delay. The best way to stop two others quarrelling is to quarrel with both yourself. Aloofness is the finest contempt. Silence is the loudest rebuke. Action is strength, but so also is inaction sometimes.

Discipline is the art of suppressing your opinion of your superiors. Few men know themselves as their juniors know them. Therefore mistrust flatterers, but seek out those who stand aloof. Shield an honest subordinate. You will come to no harm—and he will never forget. Create no obligations : but remember that kindness breeds the greatest obligations. Give your master loyalty, but not after he has spurned it. Pay your servant well, and he will love you. You yourself like generous treatment. Men's morals improve with their banking accounts. Remember the days of your own poverty. Value a friendship if you have one. Probably you have not, for real friendship is rare, except

from dogs. Do not seek devotion from others. If it comes of itself—then treasure it beyond all treasure.

*in himself
the other days*

The Kingdom of Mist.

Once he was a little king—long, long ago in another life. In that world the sunshine was bright. The days were all summer days and very long. There were red-stone palaces which had once belonged to Great Moguls, but they were *his* then. So were the shining tombs—all white, and with flowers and writing traced upon the marble in agate and lazuli. His realm was a forest with a green moss glade for treasure-house, and wonderful butterflies for jewels: and the Guardian Fairy was a woman—a very beautiful woman—who only wanted to make him happy. She used to talk to him all day, and tell him stories, and at dusk she sang him pretty songs:—

“I’m a little Alabama Coon.
I’ve not been born very long.
I remember seeing the big, round moon.
I remember hearing a sweet song.”

Then one day he died suddenly. He remembers it quite well still. A telegram; and he died. I think his small body continued to live. He could sometimes watch it moving about the rich palaces and tombs in a dull, dreary sort of way. But the sun was dark, and the forest full of gloom, for the Guardian Fairy was gone for ever. In a single moment, all the light went out of the kingdom.

Now he lives again. He is not a king any more, but just a very ordinary person. The Guardian Fairy is often near him still. He cannot see her or hear her talk and sing : but he feels her presence dimly when the wind breathes softly across the hills. The dear face is only a dream face now, remembered ever and again, when the mists of memory clear a little, revealing for a moment well remembered looks, loved expressions of caress. The vision is sad sometimes, and bitter sometimes—but never happy. The enchanted kingdom was too real to be thought of happily now—as gone for ever. Poignant grief healed up long ago, but left dull chill regrets. Tears dim the eyes sometimes, but they, do not overflow any more before the altars of those memories, whose shrine is secret and imperishable, deep down in the heart. Regret is the price paid now for Love which was once supremely good—Love which destiny gave for ever and ever, but cruelly tore away again.

* * * * *

Yet surely devotion is only strengthened by the experience of happiness and sorrow. It passes hence with fresh vitality. The Buddhas have taught that there is no 'I': that no puny individuality survives the disruption of death. Our elements have come together out of the past, not by chance, but predisposed, and attracted by many influences. Our Love is centuries old, and it passes hence into the future, stronger and purer. Nature is the common Mother of us all. Even

the animals and flowers come from her breast as we do, and return to it again. In that tender security, Love is drawn to Love by blind yearning, and finds its partner. The Buddhas have taught a wider, deeper thing than personal individuality—a great universal absorption into the spirit of Nature, where Love will find its affinity and rest content : finally and inseparably united, like parted rain-drops which mingle again in the sea.

The Sleeper Wakes.

It seemed very dark. Far away, perhaps a million miles or more, Maung Hkin could see a lamp. But it was a long way off. As he lay there on his bed, some one seemed to sit beside him, resting an arm across his breast, and saying soothing things. “Don’t be afraid Maung Hkin. We are all here. There is nothing to fear.”

Maung Hkin’s eyes, which were mad and full of stark, unspeakable, rising, terror, rested on the speaker. The words seemed to soothe him. He began repeating the months of the Burmese year “*Ta-goo : Kā-hsone : Nā-yone.*” It seemed to come back from some old lesson in the monastery school : just so much, but the rest was all fogged. He sought it in the roof. Slowly the head went back. The eyes grew wilder in the old way. Panic, unspeakably awful, was gathering in the corner of the roof. The soothing voice began to speak urgently :—

“Don’t be afraid Maung Hkin. Maung Hkin ! Maung Hkin ! do you hear ?” The Voice was very

tired, for it had said the same thing hundreds of times in three nights, seeking to stave off panic—panic which developed if the hand on Maung Hkin's breast was withdrawn, which grew if the hand remained too long, which arose at the sight of familiar faces of those round about, though they called, "Only me Maung Hkin. You know me well." Then he laughed, and an intense relief passed over his horrified face—"Oh! You. Only You. ha! ha!—I thought...." He clasped his hands to *gadaw*, but already fresh terror was rising. He shied at his knees: at the pillow behind him—"ALO PAYA! what was behind?—a pillow—ha! ha!" Then all at once fear broke out that nothing could quell. The arm across his chest stiffened, and forced him back upon his pillow. He struggled and sweated—and there were cries for help. And Maung Hkin laughed as he fought—the awful laugh of a man who laughs for fear.

"For God's sake, Doctor, send him off!"

"I'm very sorry. I have given all the morphia I dare. With the atropine, the dose was immense. It *must* act soon, but in any case I cannot inject further to-night."

For an hour or more the panics were continually soothed. Suddenly Maung Hkin was up. Possessed with demoniacal strength, and impelled by stark terror, he had broken away with a horrible yell. It was long past mid-night. Sleepers rose up with cries of alarm, all stupid with sleep. Many strong arms closed on

Maung Hkin—arms that crushed him like tentacles. Screams and laughter broke from him, till at last he was laid back again exhausted. So the battle raged through the fourth night; and *the fear* seemed to fall also upon those who watched.

Dawn broke. Maung Hkin lay arched back, his head straining to touch his heels. Foam flecked his lips. His eyes stood right out of his head. Every muscle was clutched in a vice. So he had lain off and on all night. The cry of a night bird, the fru-fru of wind in the curtains, was enough to set up a convulsion. But now a new and terrible sound came from his throat. “What is that awful noise, Doctor?”

“It is the end—the natural end of *Tetanus*. The end has come. The heart is stopping.”

“The heart has stopped. It will be finished in a minute now”

“ Oh ! ”

* * * * *

Many days later Maung Hkin gazed stupidly about him. He was no longer in his own little room, but in the big house. He was not on a bed, but on the floor. A mattress lay some way off, but he was lying on the bare boards.

“Are you awake? Would you like a drink?”

“Yes.”

Maung Hkin does not know to this day that Death rattled in his throat, and that his heart stopped beating.

What set it going again only Heaven in its mercy knows. Few men return from that far threshold, as Maung Hkin did. After that crisis, the dreadful terror, which was written as legibly on his face as in the pictures of Darwin's books, had passed definitely to uncontrollable madness. The once quiet room became pandemonium. The once cheery Maung Hkin became a ghastly maniac, with four sepoy's hanging to his wrists and ankles, in hourly reliefs. Death would be better than this—than to be chained up to a post in the jail, like the lunatic in Keng Tung !

Then at last—a long last—all the morphia and bromide and atropine descended upon the mad eyes, like loads of lead. There fell a weariness so immense that, though spasms kicked Maung Hkin from his bed to the floor, and from his mattress to the bare boards, nothing could call him back. He lay day and night saturated in sleep, while strength and reason returned again to the tortured brain. Thus is *Tetanus* cheated of its victim, now and then—but *only rarely* now and then.

“It is late,” said Maung Hkin. “I have overslept.”

“Yes. You slept well. Drink this—so.”

“Why didn't you wake me ?”

“Your spirit had wandered very far, Maung Hkin. I was afraid to wake you.”

“ Yes. Men’s spirits go forth in sleep. I have had a dream. I had a drea m.”

The tired eyes closed in deep sleep again.

END OF THE VIGIL.

Darkness full of the hideous thing !
Lift your eyes, my brother,
Seek your comfort at Nature’s knees,
Turn your face to the chill dawn breeze
Shivering o’er the hills and trees.
Hope and courage the sun-rays bring.
Dawn is breaking, brother !

Burmese Star-Light.

To-night, Capella, the brightest star in the constellation Auriga, is blazing high up in the winter sky. Its brilliance is a good omen, for it is Burma’s fateful star. The fortunes of the country wax and wane, so the Burmese say, with Capella. The stars of Auriga form, in the Burmese imagination, the figure of a Brahminy Duck, *Hin-tha Hgnet Taya*, and Capella is the jewel upon the Duck’s throat. The three nearest faint stars to Capella form a triangle representing the bird’s beak and eyes. The other bright stars in Auriga make the feet and tail, and Beta Tauri (the higher and brighter horn of our Bull Taurus) is also included by the Burmese in the tail of *Hin-tha Hgnet*. The bird, when recognized, is most conspicuous, and as a new friend is worth tracing out in the sky. The fortunes of Burmese kings depended on the three faint stars forming



MAUNG HKIN.



MAUNG PO MYIT, WITH MY CHINESE DOG LING.

the Duck's head. They were brighter in Burmese times, and they paled noticeably (so it is said) when Thibaw died, a few months ago. It is curious that the Burmese should think this, because Algol, which is close by in Perseus, does wax and wane conspicuously every few days.

The Kachins, as far as I know, have only very incoherent fables about the stars, but they take a sentimental interest in Venus, Jupiter, and Mercury, which they call respectively *Ning-rim Gin-tawng*, *N'sin Gin-tawng*, and *N'toi Gin-tawng*: the "Evening, Darkness, and Dawning Stars." I found this unexpected reference to them in a letter which Kumjé Naw, a poor, simple Kachin in my company, wrote home to his wife from Mesopotamia. "The Sun and Moon are above the Earth, and the World sees one Sun and Moon and the Stars. Oh! dear ones at home, think also of the Sun and Moon. For when the Moon dies I am only anxious if my wife and our children are still living. So when the Sun sets and Venus comes out, you also, Little Mother, think anxiously of me. In light and light, in darkness and darkness, I am praying for you without ceasing to the *Nat Gum-goon Gum-hpai*."

The Kachins call Orion *Wala Shing-tau*, and picture it as two men carrying a pig slung on a pole. They call the Pleiades *Kru Măjan*, the "Six Wars," and believe that those stars appeared at the time when China conquered their world. The Burmese call the Pleiades *Chyet-tee-ga chye*. Our Bull is a Burmese

'Sein,' which is followed by Orion (a Burmese Hunter), who also aims his arrow at the Duck *Hin-tha Hgnet*; a myth very similar to our own in which Sagittarius aims an arrow at the heart of the Scorpion.

The Burmese call the North Star *Du-woon chye*. They say that it rises the height of a grain of rice every year, and that when it reaches the zenith the world will end—a fact which, I believe, is astronomically correct. They are very ancient, these strange old fables, yet are they possessed always with new and wonderful meanings when our eyes are filled with stars.



WHEN THE FRAGRANT AIR IS LADEN WITH THE ECHO
OF A GONG.

(Shwe Dagon Pagoda, Rangoon.)

CHAPTER XVI.

THE VOICE OF BURMA.

There's a magic spell that's woven by a simple village song
When the fragrant air is laden with the echo of a gong,
When the great Pagoda-lions creep away into the gloom
And the golden dome is gleaming in the brilliance of the moon,
When the faces of the Buddhas shine illumined in the night
By the glittering of candles which the silken people light ;
When the evening air is breathing on the soft Pagoda-bells
(Ah ! the musical enchantment of the wind-blown temple bells)
Then the subtle charm of Burma steals your willing heart away—
Ah ! the magic gongs are ringing, from Rangoon to Mandalay.

IN these pages I have not written of great things. I have studied the little things, the trivial, everyday things—things we often hardly notice, but which hold their own small mysteries all the same. The wayward thought becomes a rich possession if only it contains the germ of sympathetic understanding. And understanding is only given to those who quit the beaten road of convention, and follow the path of their own inclination. It may even be that we sometimes arrive nearer than we think to those advanced meditations, the JHANAS, when the mind detaches itself from its bodily prison, and wanders free and far beyond the quiet hills. We are sure then of the universal brotherhood of all life,

and are aware (however dimly) of our real place in the harmonious scheme of things. The subconscious knowledge of our relationship with Nature, and with the infinities of Time and Space, becomes at such moments an intimate reality. We perceive that we toil now after foolishness. The ULTIMATE is emancipation from all that, and a peace of mind which follows upon perfect enlightenment.

So I have sought inspiration from simple folk and simple creatures, from birds and insects, and from my other jungle neighbours. I have made real friendships in the animal world, friendships more important to me I think than many human ones. All that experience of trivialities I have written down here, partly to amuse myself, partly to share the pleasure with my brothers in exile. For exile can be lightened by these little observations. The loneliness of distant out-posts can be comforted and the silence charmed by the Voice of Burma. These little things weave an enchantment about our daily toil and common task, and remain to us afterwards for a memory. There are hundreds of little voices speaking—as many indeed as there are bells on the Hopong Pagoda—but they all blend into one melody, and that is the Voice of Burma. Some are harsh sounds, like the yell of Chinese muleteers calling ‘*zin—nee—ma*’ to their mules. Others are soft, like sighing of wind through frontier pines. Taken altogether they are one voice, recalling all that Burma means to the heart of each one of us.

You have heard the voices which call from the forest—*Yauk-hpa Kwe-Kaw* shouting his hunting song. You have heard the ghostly old lady who cries to her husband,—

“ Oh ! old man, oh !
Build a pagoda, oh !
I told you to do so.”

You know the Crow Pheasant's moaning ‘ *Whoop, whoop, whoop* ’ ; the *tap-tapping* of Wood-peckers ; the ‘ *Shwe py—ee zoe* ’ of the Iora. Mynahs chatter ; Babblers laugh and chuckle ; Gibbons whoop cheerfully every morning in camp when you take your early tea ; and in the Rains the reel of Crickets tortures your nerves like a dentist's drill. What miles and miles of woodland and frontier hills these sounds recall !

By the camp-fire at night the faint, regular voice of *Kwung Kulu*, the Night-jar, breaks in upon your thoughts by its very persistence. She is calling through the forest in a fruitless search for her dead husband, ‘ *Chung-dzur Fung ! Chung-dzur Fung !* ’ In the eaves of the matting rest-house *Zee-gwet* and *Dee-doke*, the Owls, chuckle with malicious mirth ; while *Tucktoo*, the Lizard, comes down to his appointed place by the wall-lamp and calls ‘ *Tau-teh Tau-teh* ’ ten times. Every one is on good terms with the *Tucktoo*, for his presence is lucky.

Outside, a bullock-cart has passed down the deserted road. The moaning and creaking of its wheels grow

faint in the distance. There is music in that sound. It is the majestic music to which Japanese Emperors pass to their tombs on groaning funeral cars.

In the pasture-land wooden cattle-bells go 'tock tock' as the cows move about grazing. The great buffaloes say 'Ngar Ha! Ngar Ha!' You have read why they say that, and why Burmese ponies laugh a malicious 'Hee hee hee' when they neigh. The buffaloes are dangerous beasts, with scant respect for anything in trousers and a sola-topee. But of them it may be truly said that 'a little child shall lead them.' The white-eyed brute which you gladly walk half a mile to avoid, meekly submits to a little Burmese boy dressed in nothing but a very big hat; submits to be beaten and abused and ridden, and to have his sides drummed on by a small pair of heels. In the swamps, where the buffaloes graze, 'Did you do it?' the Lapwing, flies to and fro over you, screaming his excited Burmese cry 'Tit-tee-du! Tit-tee-du!'

Those are the sounds of a Burmese village. The villages of almost unknown tribes along the Yünnanese border all have other noises of their own. There is a curious hiccougging song which Yawyin women sing as they husk paddy every evening. The Marus sing quavering notes, beat gongs, and fire off guns in the thatching season. And the Kaws shout a long-drawn single note as they return home, competing with each other as to who can keep it up longest.

The Irrawaddy also has its own peculiar noises—the chatter, clang, and clamour of merry crowds and shifting cargoes, when steamers touch at river-side ports. Twice a week the mail boat passes the village monastery where you put up, hooting as she comes round the bend. The mail boat is a lady, and she doesn't even bow to such a dull little village as this. But she brings with her an atmosphere of civilization as she passes. By day the people on board look so sociable. By night the glow of her electric light, the clamour of her machinery, fills you with yearning out there, in the mud of the Irrawaddy's bank. Her beam of searchlight rests coldly upon you, as rude as the stare of a woman who cuts you. Then you are left blinking in the darkness. The swift throbs of her paddles approach, retire, and die away. Till next Thursday she is gone, and you feel rather lonely in your river-side village.

Then one day she carries you off. The village looks strangely attractive as you sweep by. How well you know every pagoda, every lion, every image! There are new voices speaking now—the hum of engines, so pleasant after long, solitary days of discomfort. The lascars call '*ek bam do hath*' as they cast the lead. So you relapse into board-ship laziness, which is all the sweeter for watching other people work.

The Burmese spread their mats upon the decks, and sit gossiping and smoking the whole day long. Snatches of their conversation come to you,—'*Ho-din*'?

(what do you call it?): and '*Hoat-dey Paya*' (Yes); and of course '*Yauk-chya*' and '*Mein-ma.*' Wherever two or three Burmese are gathered together, they talk '*Yauk-chya Mein-ma*' as inevitably as Indians talk '*pice.*' '*Yauk-chya Mein-ma*' are the concerns of men and women—a topic apparently of inexhaustible interest.

The solemn tones of a gong, voices chanting rapidly in the pagoda, the murmur of adoration, when candles and flowers are placed before a glittering shrine—all these are the voices of a Burmese dusk.

Now and again, the deep boom of a bell comes vibrating upon the night, followed by a sharp '*tock tock*' as the ringer beats the ground with his deer-horn to propitiate the *Nats*. Chords of music float on the night breeze as it breathes upon the spire bells, setting free their melody. The song of villagers returning home from their labour comes to me across the paddy fields. I believe these sounds will come to me across half the world some day, when I am gone.

THE END.

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